

NEW ON SATURDAYS

THE TIMES FOR ONLY 20P

BORN TO BE WILD
Big cats even circus trainers can't tame
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HUNGER BUSTING YOGHURT
Is this the new way to diet?
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THE YOUNG DYLAN
Pop's new generation
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Journalists meet the terrorists on eve of Mowlam's visit

Open day at the Maze prison

BY AUDREY MAGEE AND ANDREW PIERCE

MO MOWLAM took another controversial step in her attempt to save the Northern Ireland peace process yesterday by offering to meet IRA prisoners as well as loyalists when she visits the Maze prison today.

The IRA "officer in command" Padraic Wilson said that his men were deliberating the invitation. The loyalists who will certainly meet Dr Mowlam meanwhile held court as the gates of the jail were opened to the media for the first time.

The idea was to prove that the authorities had not surrendered control to the 550 inmates and to counter reports that the prison was run like a holiday camp with sex, drugs and drink readily available.

But the governor conceded that he "co-operated" with the IRA and the loyalist Ulster Defence Association and Ulster Volunteer Force, which ran their wings along army lines—the IRA being the strictest and most regimented. The walls are decorated with paramilitary murals, crests and mottos such as "no surrender" and "welcome to west Belfast".

Michael Stone of the UDA, who is serving 30 years for murdering three mourners at an IRA funeral, and Sam McGorry of the Ulster Freedom Fighters, jailed for 16 years for attempted murder, happily posed for pictures at the entrance to H-block 7 where a slogan declares: "Better to die on your feet than live on your knees in an Irish republic".

Both men insisted that the public view of the Maze was all wrong. "There is no booze. There is no sex and we do not have guns," McGorry said. "We find it quite funny to read some of the things written about us, but it is very embarrassing and humiliating to our families. The majority of people in here are health and



Loyalist negotiators: triple murderer Michael Stone (left) and Sam McGorry, in for attempted murder, will see Dr Mowlam today

fitness fanatics, half are on a free or vegan diet, not running around as junkies," McGorry, who was in control I wouldn't be sitting here talking to you. I'd be out of here, away through those gates. The responsibility of the

people who manage this jail is to keep us here. It's our duty as political prisoners to get out. To stage an escape whenever we can, and we have only managed that once — Liam Averill — since 1983.

It was Averill's escape, disguised as a woman visitor, shortly before Christmas, coupled with the murder of the Loyalist Volunteer Force leader Billy Wright that led to renewed attacks on the

jail's security — and ultimately to yesterday's open day.

"I am doing this because public confidence has sapped," the governor Martin Mogg, said. "I do not think it is a lax regime and I think it is quite appropriate for people who are spending lifetimes in jail," he pointed to the 300 security cameras, the 30ft walls, the wires draped across the prison yard to stop helicopters, the heavy iron gates, the razor wire round the fences and the central locking system that allows only one gate to open at a time.

But even as he did so, the guards were undermining what he had to say. "Don't believe a word they or the governor tell you," he said after confirming that prisoners had been subjected to an unusually exhaustive search yesterday. "This place is a joke. It's a half. You don't know the half of it and neither does Mo Mowlam. I don't think her coming here will make a damn bit of difference. There is no reasoning with these boys, none whatsoever."

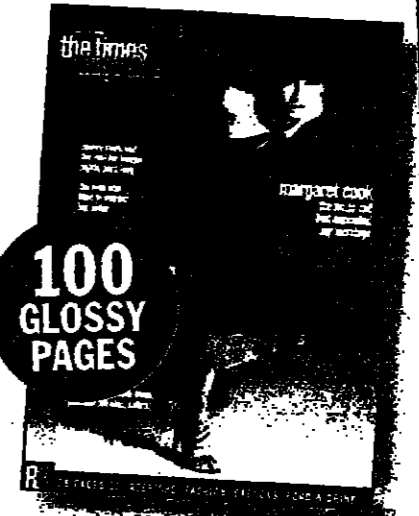
Dr Mowlam will be the first Secretary of State to visit terrorist prisoners when she and her two deputies step through the prison gates today and in doing so she is taking a huge political risk. She was given strong backing by the Cabinet yesterday.

Her aim is to persuade the loyalist prisoners to stick with the talks at Stormont — due to resume on Monday — and she told colleagues that hard work and goodwill could keep the process on track; Tony Blair said that she was doing a "superb job".

But Unionists and the Conservatives condemned her tactics. Lord Tebbit, whose wife was crippled in the Brighton bombing of 1984, said: "I cannot conceive that it is appropriate for the

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TOMORROW IN THE TIMES



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Dewar to run for top Scottish job

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, ended months of speculation by confirming that he will stand for election to a Scottish parliament.

His decision, announced after a meeting with Tony Blair, puts him in the running for the post of Scotland's First Minister. Page 2

Race still on

The race to make the first round-the-world trip by hot air balloon remains wide open after the latest attempt by an international team in the Swiss Alps failed. Page 13

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Cook marriage ended with call from Blair press chief

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

TONY BLAIR sent a handwritten letter to the cast-off wife of Robin Cook expressing sympathy over the media coverage of the Foreign Secretary's illicit affair, but omitting to say he was sorry that their 28-year marriage was over.

Margaret Cook, 52, a mother of two, fired off an angry response to Downing Street and asked for a meeting with the Prime Minister or Peter Mandelson because of the important part she said they had played in the ending of her marriage.

In an interview for a book, *Westminster Women*, Mrs Cook says that her marriage finished after a telephone call from Alistair Campbell, Mr Blair's press secretary. The couple had stayed together despite her assertion that her husband had had several affairs over the years. Mrs Cook knew about her husband's

most recent, with Gaynor Regan, his secretary.

The Foreign Secretary and his wife were being driven to Heathrow airport on Friday, August 1, last year, en route to Montana for a riding holiday, when Mr Cook's mobile telephone rang with a call from Mr Campbell, giving him instructions. At Terminal 4, Mr Cook asked for a VIP room to talk privately to his wife,

closed the door and told her the *News of the World* had "got the story". He said he had been told he could not leave the country, so the holiday was cancelled. He ended the marriage there and then.

Mr Cook then told his eldest son, Chris, who had come to the airport to see them off, that he was having an affair with his secretary and was leaving Mrs Cook.

"It's selfish that men should expect it all," Mrs Cook says in an interview with Linda McDougall, the book's author, who is married to the Labour MP Austin Mitchell.

Mr Blair's letter said that he and Cherie were very sad and supportive about the pressures of press and public attention that Mrs Cook had to put up with. She wrote back, asking whether they were also sad and supportive about her ruined marriage.



Full interview with Margaret Cook in tomorrow's Magazine

Chinese swim into drug row

BY CRAIG LORD IN PERTH

CUSTOMS officers found what they believe is illegal human growth hormone when a Chinese swimming team arrived in Australia for the world championships last night.

A total of 26 vials were sent for laboratory tests. They were found in a bag belonging to Yuan Yuan, 21, one of the world's fastest breaststroke swimmers. Yuan said she was carrying the vials for a Chinese doctor in Australia. An official for the swimming team said the vials contained nothing more than "turtle jelly", a Chinese tonic.

Last October, two Chinese women broke the last two remaining world records set by East Germans, raising speculation about drug taking.

China in dock, page 48

£2m bill to repair Selsey's tornado damage

BY RICHARD DUCS AND EMMA WILKINS

A HUGE repair operation is taking place in Selsey, West Sussex, after a 100mph tornado cut through the town and damaged 1,000 buildings.

The bill facing the town of 10,000 people, still recovering from force 12 winds last weekend, could rise beyond £2 million after the freak whirlwind struck just before midnight on Wednesday.

The tornado, preceded by thunderstorms and hailstones three quarters of an inch in diameter, swept in from the west of the peninsula and left a trail of destruction along its two-mile path before moving out to sea again and causing more devastation in northern

France. The wind hit for no more than a few seconds but ripped countless slates from roofs, knocked down chimneys, sucked out windows and wrecked garden sheds and garages. It is estimated a fifth of all properties was affected by the tornado.

West Sussex County Council yesterday brought its emergency planning procedure into action and more than 120 firemen from across the county were drafted in to help make houses and shops safe. An emergency shelter was set up in the high street parish hall.

Despite the ferocity of the wind only two people suffered minor injuries and only two homes were rendered uninhabitable. Jeremy Wearn hid under the duvet cover as the freak wind struck and

emerged to find his bedroom wall had been blown down.

Patrick Moore, the astronomer who lives in a 15th-century house in the town, lost the roof of one of his three garden observatories. Mr Moore, 74, presenter of the BBC's *Sky at Night*, said: "There was a clap of thunder followed by a tremendous rushing wind. I realised it was a tornado straightaway. It was like a mighty train."

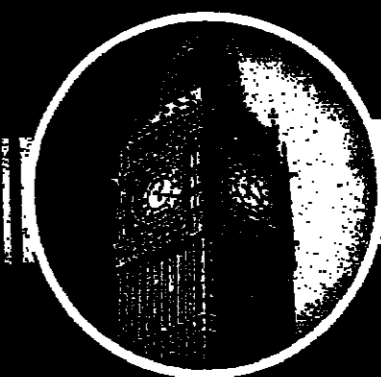
Police and firemen stayed in the town last night to monitor the damage and homeowners were warned not to be taken in by "cowboy" builders offering their services.

Armageddon, page 3
Forecast, page 24



HIS NEW BESTSELLER

JACK HIGGINS



DRINK WITH THE DEVIL

SETTING THE PACE FOR A THRILLING 1998

OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK

Dewar to run for Scotland's top job

BY GILLIAN HARRIS, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

DONALD DEWAR, the Scottish Secretary, ended months of speculation by confirming he would stand for election to a Scottish parliament.

His decision, announced yesterday after a meeting with Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, puts him in the running for the post of Scotland's First Minister and leader of the Edinburgh-based parliament which opens in January 2000.

In a statement Mr Dewar said: "For many years I have been a strong supporter of a Scottish parliament - committed and convinced of the need for radical reform within the United Kingdom. I have been fortunate in being given the task of producing the White Paper and now the Scotland Bill.

"I have been concerned to make sure that the scheme was right and fully meets the expectations of Scotland

Salmond, one of Labour's coalition partners during last year's referendum campaign, described the Scottish Secretary as a "worthy opponent". But he said it was too early to speculate about his elevation to First Minister.

"Arrogance seems to be creeping into Labour's soul," he said. "It is presumptuous to assume that he will become First Minister. The issue of who will be First Minister is for the people of Scotland to determine in elections to the parliament."

Raymond Robertson, the chairman of the Scottish Tory Party, said: "There are apparently no bounds to Labour's arrogance if they believe they will automatically command a majority in the Scottish parliament."

The Scotland Bill states that the First Minister will be elected by members of the party which holds an overall majority in the Scottish parliament. In the event of a hung parliament the First Minister would be chosen by the coalition parties.

Merzies Campbell, the home affairs spokesman for the Scottish Liberal Democrats, said Mr Dewar had made an "entirely logical" decision to stand. "He will be a commanding presence in the Scottish parliament and has the advantage of being highly regarded across the political spectrum," he said.

Mr Dewar's unprecedented popularity in Scotland stems from his successful delivery of the Home Rule White Paper and the Scotland Bill within six months of Labour's general election victory. Along with his coalition partners, he campaigned to bring about the first Scottish parliament in almost 300 years.

Earlier this week the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who was expected to stand as a Scottish candidate, ruled himself out of the contest, leaving the way clear for Mr Dewar. Last night Mr Cook "warmly welcomed" his Cabinet colleague's decision to stand.

Now that he has delighted his supporters by agreeing to stand as a Member of the Scottish Parliament, Mr Dewar faces a selection process which has yet to be finalised. The Scottish executive of the Labour party will meet on January 17 to agree procedures for the parliamentary elections due to take place in May next year.



A Loyalist mural at the Maze Prison near Belfast, which Mo Mowlam is visiting today in the hope of saving the Ulster peace process

Terrorists hold court on Maze open day

Secretary of State to go to a jail to plead with murderers, bombers and extortionists whether they are loyalists or republicans. Once that door has been opened she will find it difficult to shut again.

And Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, accused Dr Mowlam of preparing to grovel to the paramilitaries. Ordinary decent people were not listened to by the Secretary of State who "only has ears for the gunmen and bombers".

Much depends on the loyalist prisoners' assessment of Dr Mowlam today and while they saw her visit as a positive move, they refused to predict any outcome. Bobby Philpott, who is serving 17 years for attempted murder and is one of the five loyalists due to meet the minister today, said: "It's on a knife-edge." Stone said: "We will be there to listen, not negotiate."

Hours earlier, he had sat on his cell bed listening to a radio appeal by the daughter of one of his victims, calling

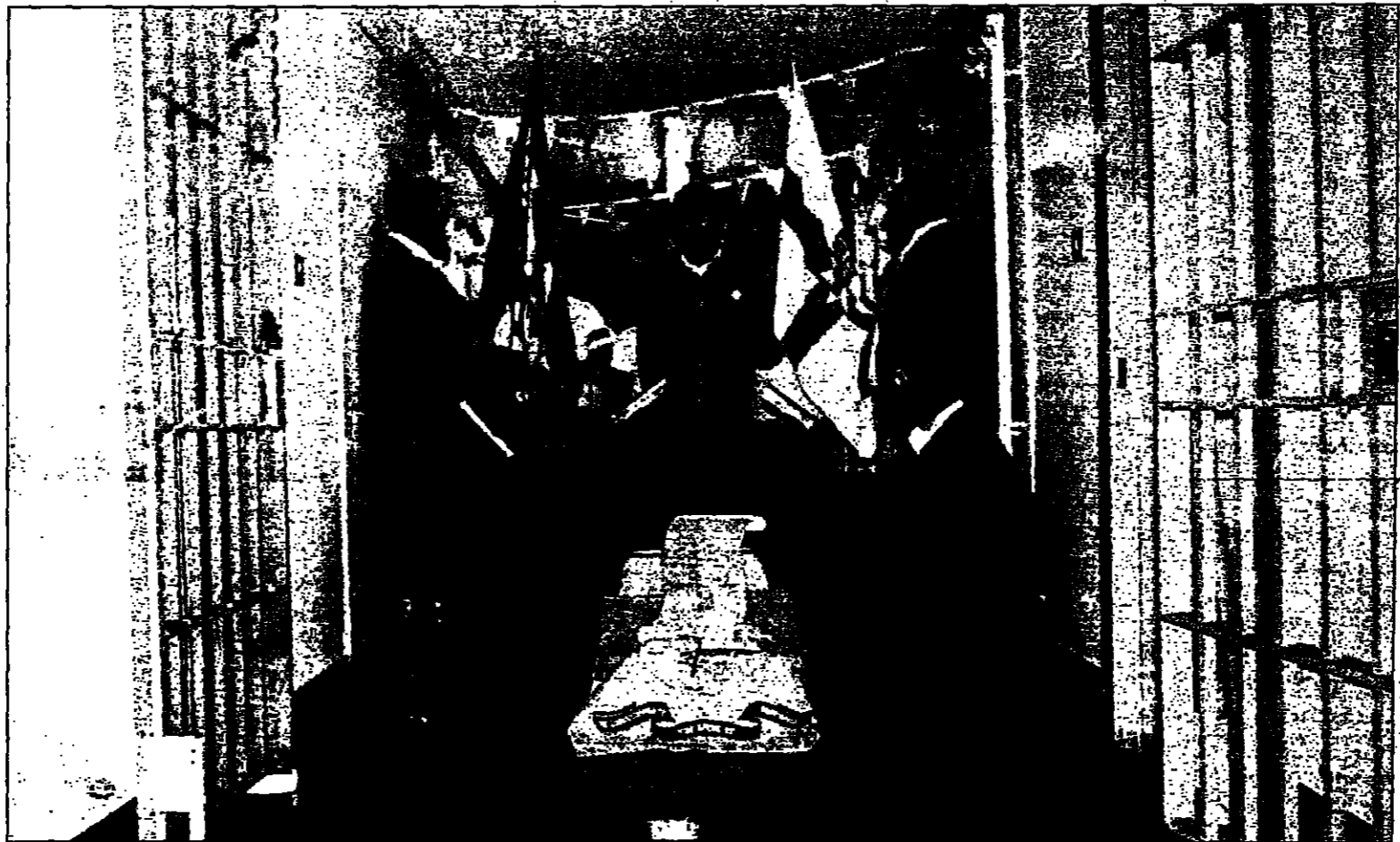
on all sides to give peace a chance. Now Stone stood before reporters in heavy black boots, jeans and white shirt, his greying hair swept back in a ponytail and said: "I felt for that girl. She is very brave in what she says. It must be difficult for her. In the same way it's difficult for loyalists or even Kelly, the Shamkilt bomber."

"I suppose if she (Mowlam) met him, loyalists wouldn't be too happy about it. But that girl seems a bit bigger than politicians who've crit-

cised this meeting." Asked if he felt any guilt about killing her father, Sinn Féin activist Paddy Brady, he said: "Regrets. We're all only human. But I'm a volunteer. He was a volunteer."

"There was a war going on and I was out there. Of course all deaths were regrettable. But I'm a volunteer, a soldier. If there was no war, I wouldn't be here."

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Loyalist Volunteer Force prisoners at the Maze paying a final tribute to murdered leader Billy Wright who was shot in the prison last month



Dewar committed to radical reform

which were so clearly shown in the general election and in the subsequent referendum. Now, with the Bill published, I feel it is the right time to make clear my own intentions."

After their meeting Mr Blair expressed his regret that Mr Dewar would be leaving Westminster, but added that he had encouraged the Scottish Secretary to make the move. "Of course he will be a loss to us, the Government, but I believe that by standing for the Scottish parliament he will enhance both the Scottish system and the whole British political system. It is a decision I very much welcome and indeed I actively encouraged this coming about."

Mr Dewar's announcement, although widely anticipated, was welcomed enthusiastically by opposition politicians. The leader of the Scottish National Party, Alex

Leading article, page 21

Labour expels defiant MEPs

BY JAMES LANDALE

TWO Labour MEPs were expelled from the party for the first time in its history yesterday as Tony Blair sought to stamp out further internal revolt in Strasbourg.

Ken Coates, MEP for North Nottinghamshire and Cheshire, and Hugh Kerr, MEP for Essex West and Hertfordshire East, have repeatedly criticised the party leadership over planned benefit cuts and selection procedures for the European elections. Both were

told that their decision to ally themselves temporarily with the Green Party Group in the European Parliament and to sit as Independent Labour members was "fundamentally inconsistent" with party membership rules.

The MEPs have already been expelled from the European Labour Party and the Socialist Group at the Parliament. Their expulsion, ordered by Tom Sawyer, Labour's General Secretary, will be confirmed by the National Executive Committee later this month. The severity of the move is emphasised by its rarity.

No Labour MEP has ever been expelled from the party. The last Labour MPs to be expelled were Dave Nellist and Terry Fields in 1991 for their membership of Militant. MPs more recently involved in controversy, such as Tommy Graham, MP for West Renfrewshire, and Mohammed Sarwar, MP for Glasgow Govan, have merely been suspended from the party.

Mr Kerr and Mr Coates accused the party leadership of planning to use new proportional representation selection procedures for the 1999 European elections to purge Old Labour MEPs such as themselves from the lists. They had come under pressure from the party leadership and their local parties to resign voluntarily, but they refused.

In a joint statement, they said they were not surprised by the decision, but were appalled at the way it was taken. They said only the NEC could order expulsions.

Portillo wants election re-match

BY POLLY NEWTON

MICHAEL PORTILLO has said that he might stand for Parliament again in Enfield Southgate, the seat that he lost to Labour in one of the biggest upsets of the general election.

The former Defence Secretary said in an interview for a local newspaper that he wanted to return to the Commons and would consider contesting his former constituency, which was won by Stephen Twigg with a swing of Labour of more than 17 per cent.

Mr Portillo, who held the seat with a majority of 15,000 in 1992, said: "I don't think I would find it particularly difficult to stand there again. I think the Tories can get back in Enfield."

He was less clear on the subject of his Conservative leadership ambitions. Questioned by a reporter from the *Enfield Gazette*, he said: "The dogs bark and the caravan moves on."

However, he was full of praise for William Hague. "He has great intelligence, firm views and is very witty," but, in an acknowledgement that Mr Hague has so far failed to impress voters, he said: "I can't believe that sooner or later these qualities won't come across to the public."

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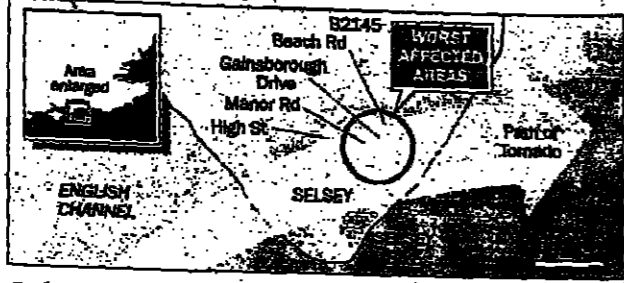
DELL

It felt

The sh... at night falls in for Patrick Moore

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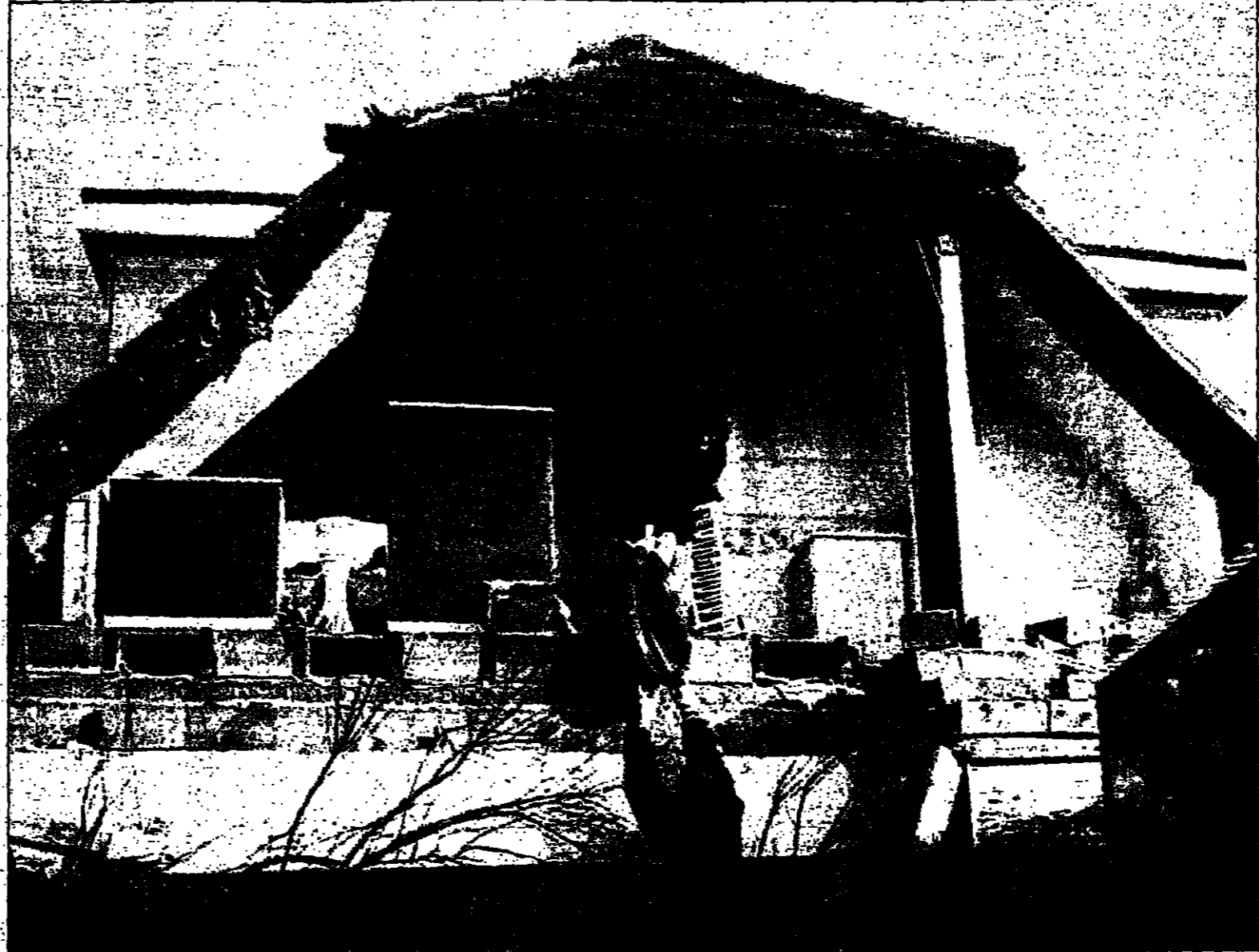
'It felt as if Armageddon had come'



The 100mph tornado that ripped through Selsey left widespread damage, writes Richard Duce

IT WAS at 11.45pm precisely that the neat street of semi-detached bungalows that was Gainsborough Drive bore the brunt of a 100 mph tornado which in seconds cut a two-mile swath across the small south-coast town of Selsey.

At No 22, Michael Simper, 58, said: "The tornado carved a line down the road. I've got double-glazed leaded-light windows and they just went out with a bang."



Gone with the wind: Jeremy and Donna Wearn recover their possessions after the side of their house was blown away by the "incredible, roaring" tornado

Husband woke to find wall had gone

By Emma Wilkins

JEREMY WEARN was asleep at his home on Selsey on Friday when he was woken by the sound of roaring wind. He huddled beneath his duvet until the noise stopped - and emerged to find that his bedroom wall had been ripped away.

descriptions of its ferocity. Eric Paine said: "It felt as if Armageddon had come. There was a tremendous clap of thunder and lightning and terrific howling of wind. It was as if the whole place was coming down."

Along with most others in Gainsborough Drive, a street of some 200 houses, Sheila Spry at No 36 rushed outside after the tornado had passed to witness the destruction wrought to her home in seconds.

The sky at night falls in for Patrick Moore

AS HE surveyed the wreckage of his garden observatory, Patrick Moore had an extra regret (Emma Wilkins writes). His next-door neighbour's sycamore tree was still standing.



Moore by his wrecked observatory. "It was nasty"

the windows was bending inwards from the force of the wind. We dashed into the middle of the restaurant because we feared being hit by flying glass.

Britain, little known home of the twister

BY ALAN HAMILTON AND NICK NUTTALL
HISTORY'S best-known tornado is the one that snatched Dorothy from her home on the Kansas plains and landed her at the feet of the Wizard of Oz, but Britain has had its share of powerful real-life twisters.

and the only time Britain has come close to experiencing a true hurricane, a tornado was sighted in Oxfordshire and graphically reported to Daniel Defoe. "A spout marching with wind like the trunk of an elephant snapped the body of an oak, sucked up water in cart ruts, tumbled an old barn and twisted its thatch around in the air."

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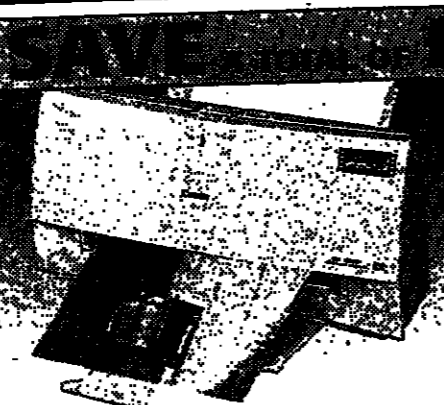
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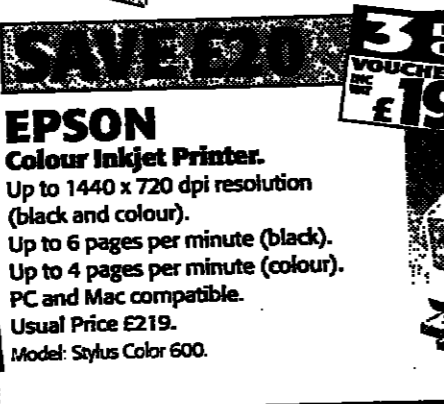
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Circus man may face charge on shot tiger

A MEMBER of the Chipperfield circus family could face criminal charges for shooting dead a Bengal tiger after it savaged his brother. The 21-stone animal is said to have been securely returned to its cage before Graham Chipperfield walked up and fired a shotgun five times.

Police at St Petersburg, Florida, said that Mr Chipperfield, 28, had been "in a very emotional state" after seeing his brother attacked. However, state law allows the use of fatal force against dangerous animals only when the animal is posing a danger.

Possible charges include cruelty to an animal and discharging a firearm in a public building, which carries a maximum penalty of five years in jail for first-time offenders. Mr Chipperfield's brother Richard, 24, had spent four years raising the tiger Arnold from a cub. The two men and 12 tigers in the Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus were posing for promotional photographs when the younger brother

Police say that animal was secure in cage when it was killed by the brother of Chipperfield victim.

From Graham Dudman in Miami

placed his head near the tiger's jaws and made a fluttering sound that tigers take as a sound of affection. Arnold did what he would to another tiger to show affection — and put his powerful jaws round the head.

Employing a fire extinguisher and circus whip, Graham Chipperfield and an assistant managed to prize open the tiger's mouth before locking the tigers safely in their cages. However, Richard received massive head injuries. Last night he was in a critical but stable condition in the intensive care unit of St Petersburg's Bayfront Medical Centre after a three-hour operation.

Bill Doniel, a spokesman

for St Petersburg Police, said: "The first officer arrived at the scene as Richard was being given medical attention. He saw Graham and other circus staff move 12 tigers from the ring into individual transport cages after the attack."

The tiger that attacked was safe and secure when Graham picked up a shotgun and fired five times at point blank range. The officer immediately told him to drop the gun, which he did.

"Graham was obviously in a very emotional state after seeing his brother's head ripped apart and that played a major part in explaining his actions. He told our officer he thought the tiger was agitated. The animal had tasted blood

and he didn't want to take any chances. He claimed he had checked to make sure there was nobody behind the cage in his line of fire. The shotgun was his private weapon. The circus does not allow staff to have weapons.

The decision on whether to prosecute will rest with the State Attorney. He will definitely take into consideration the circumstances."

Officials from the US Department of Agriculture, which investigates cruelty to circus animals, visited the scene but left saying they were satisfied with safety standards at the circus.

A housewife, Tammy Guthrie, who took her two children to the circus last Sunday, drove to the big top to leave flowers for the tiger after hearing about the shooting on radio. She said: "I feel bad for the man that was hurt but he didn't have to be in that situation to begin with if they didn't have the tigers in their act."

Leading article, page 21



Graham Chipperfield, left, who shot the tiger five times, with his brother Richard, who is in intensive care

Family is used to dangers in the ring

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

THE Chipperfield dynasty has generally been spared from maulings by the big cats they have used to enthral circus audiences throughout the world for over 313 years.

However, a death and several serious incidents in recent years served as a reminder of the dangers that one of the world's leading circus families face daily. Richard Chipperfield's father, Dick, was bitten on the head and body by a panther in a similar incident in the mid-1970s. He required 30 stitches in his head, legs and arms after the animal turned on him during a performance in London.

Recalling the incident, circus historian Don Stacey said: "It was serious enough at the time. He had been lying on the ground calling five big cats to lie over him when one just swiped at him for no apparent reason."

Richard's brother, Graham, who shot the tiger that mauled Richard, was himself attacked by a lion in a rehearsal soon after he arrived in America in 1993. He was saved by an assistant who was in the cage with him — and by his leather jacket. Mr Stacey, editor of the

weekly circus magazine *World Fair*, said: "He was in intensive care for several days."

Graham was also injured on the circus's opening night in New York when a lion he had trained to stage a mock attack on him got too enthusiastic and hit him in the mouth with a paw. The result was two lost teeth and a further reminder of the dangers he chooses to face.

Dick's uncle, Jimmy Chipperfield, was injured when wrestling with a bear for a stunt. He lost a kidney as a result of an unexpected attack and left the circus in the 1950s to train wild animals for film and television. Some years later his daughter, Mary, lost the top of a finger to a big cat.

The only death happened in 1932 when Tommy Purchase, brother-in-law of Jimmy Chipperfield, was mauled by a lion despite an attempt to rescue him by Dick Chipperfield's father.

Commenting on the family's record, Mr Stacey added: "The Chipperfields have always been regarded as one of the safest in the business and have been relatively accident free."



Dangerous even after many years of domestication

A tiger can never change its stripes

By NICK NUTTALL

NO MATTER how domesticated a performing tiger may appear to be, its dangerous natural instincts are always lurking just below the surface, experts said yesterday.

Tricia Hodson, manager of the Born Free Foundation's big cat programme, said: "You can never breed out or sublimate a tiger's basic instincts. It is a solitary, predatory, animal. These behaviours will always be lurking beneath the surface."

"Look at the domestic cat. We have been domesticating it for thousands of years and it still wants to go out and hunt birds and mice. You cannot take away predatory or social behaviour like this."

Nick Ellerton, curator of mammals at Chester Zoo, agreed. He said many circus tigers were Bengal hybrids that have been bred in captivity for generations. "But I would not trust one," he said. He said circuses can create

dangerous tensions among big cats, which are territorial in the wild. "Sliding eight tigers around in close proximity to each other could create conflicts that are taken out on the trainer," Mr Ellerton said.

Mrs Hodson said they had recently rescued eight tigers from a circus in Italy. She said their wild instincts had re-emerged within weeks.

"In Italy the animals may have appeared subdued to the people who fed them. But when they turned their backs the animals were up to the bars in the hunting position," she said.

Peter Jackson, chairman of the World Conservation Union's cat specialist group, said that the most dangerous tigers in the wild were Bengals from west Bengal and neighbouring Bangladesh: "There are accounts of tigers swimming out to take fishermen from their boats."





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Palace took fright at the servants' revolt

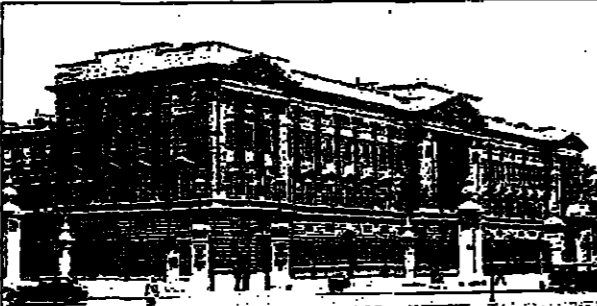
Secret papers disclose a threatened pay strike, reports Richard Ford

BUCKINGHAM Palace became alarmed that it would have to deal with trades unions after disgruntled employees joined a union in protest at low pay at the end of the Second World War, secret government papers disclose.

The spectre of militancy at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle provoked serious concern among George VI's closest advisers who feared that allowing staff to have union representation was "the thin end of the wedge". Although a social revolution was in progress under Clement Attlee's Labour Government, senior officials in the Royal Household wanted "no truck" with the union, whose membership was growing among the staff.

The arrival of the union came in 1946, when staff became "disgruntled and began to organise themselves and finally went in large numbers and joined the Civil Service Union", according to the government papers. The worries among Palace officials are disclosed in a Treasury minute written at the end of several months of secret negotiations aimed at securing a settlement that would not provoke a public protest by staff.

The Treasury files, closed for 50 years, were released at the Public Record Office in



TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Trade unions have been a feature of Palace life for many years (Alan Hamilton writes). All staff are free to join, although only about 20 per cent of the Royal Household's 550 permanent employees are union members. Most have joined the Public and Commercial Services Union, the current name of the Civil Service Union that so alarmed George VI. Staff in the Royal Mews belong to the Transport and General Workers'

presence, second yeomen of the cellars, first yeoman of the silver pantry and other workers.

"The union is extremely unhappy about the rates of pay and the amount of war increment paid during the war period," he wrote. Then, he added none too subtly that the union was "not unmindful of the desirability of securing a settlement privately and without recourse to any public form of pressure".

But he added that "the situation in regard to the rates of pay is so difficult, however, in view of the very low rates being paid, that the union cannot guarantee to restrain its members from the more public methods of rectifying their grievances unless discussions are started and completed very quickly".

The Palace took the line that it should refuse to negotiate because the staff were not, technically, civil servants. The Treasury advised strongly against this stance.

A deal was reached after talks at the Ministry of Labour in April 1946. The union was recognised as representing Palace staff, but it agreed that no publicity should be given to the fact that there was a Palace branch.

It was agreed that the CSU would deal with matters of



George VI, left, was said to be out of touch with the social revolution sparked by the election of Clement Attlee.



Kew. The Palace received the unwelcome news that workers had begun agitating in a letter in March from Robert Anderson, deputy general secretary of the CSU. He wrote to the

superintendent at Buckingham Palace and informed him that the union had set up a branch in a department which included housemaids, pages of the backstairs, pages of the

pay but not those of appointment, promotion or dismissal and that negotiations on pay would be conducted through a government department acting as negotiators for the Palace, rather than direct discussions between union leaders and Palace officials.

On May 14 it was an-

ounced that the King had "graciously agreed" to approve increases in the wages of his household staff, including a 51.1% increase for the page of the backstairs, who had been earning £303, and a similar sum for the first yeoman of the silver pantry, who had been earning a basic £225.

In a Treasury note after the pay rise had been announced, an official commented that, during the war, Palace authorities "mainly I think because they were out of touch with reality", had allowed the wages of their employees to fall behind levels in industry and government departments.

The official praised the union, which had acted "very discreetly" and then added: "We have also told the Palace that the intervention of a union may not be an unmitigated nuisance, because it may help to prevent further discontent and kill at birth many minor grievances".

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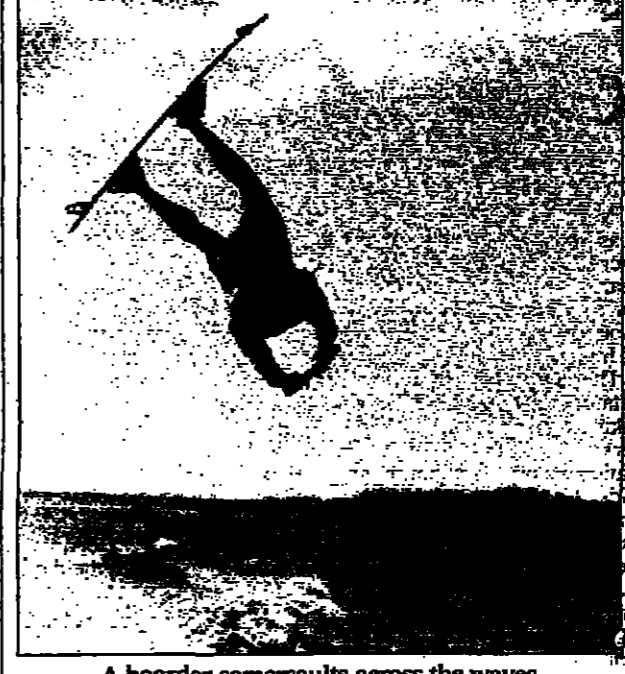
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A boarder somersaults across the waves

Boarders make a splash at the Boat Show

Philip Delves Broughton sees a new wave sweeping Earls Court

THE customary display of sleek yachts and vulgar motor cruisers bobbing about on the waters of the London International Boat Show has been infiltrated by a new wave. The Boarding Generation has yet to be logged into Downing Street's file on New Britain, but in social and economic terms, it is a rising force.

While their parents ski, the young people who make up the Boarding Generation snowboard. They spurn the young urban professionals on their in-line skates, preferring the skateboard; and when on water they do not yacht or waterski, they waveboard.

As the Beach Boys provided the soundtrack for the surfing generation, so the Boarding Generation goes about its business to the fast, trippy dance music of The Prodigy. The boarders' importance is marked by a larger than ever presence among the traditionally conservative blazers and dockside shoes at Earls Court, where the Boat Show opens today.

"We sell to the Boarding Generation," said Ian Grainger of The Waveboard Company, which has a large stand in a corner of Earls Court dominated by a technician surf and waveboard kit. "The board sports have all come from America but they have really taken over here. Kids don't want to do the same sports as their parents. They love to board."

The Waveboard Company sells about 2,000 of its boards in Britain each year. They range in price from £250 for a basic model to £600 for a super-lightweight model.

Waveboards are about twice the size of skateboards. The waveboarder is strapped onto the board by his feet and pulled behind a speedboat that is weighted at the back to create a bigger wave. The real pros can flip and somersault across waves. Where surfboarders must rely on nature's swells and currents, the waveboarder creates his own.

The patterns on the boards and the clothes of the boarders is similar across the board: sports: bright, wavy and psychedelic, sometimes featuring bubbly cartoon characters.

As if in defiance, the great British built motor yacht come arrowing out of their stands from the other side of the two exhibition halls. Princess, a British marque, is showing boats from the 39' *Laa-Laa*, named after the yellow Teletubby, up to the most expensive boat in the entire show, 71ft and more than £1 million of luxury.

The show organisers hope that up to £60 million of business will be generated over the next ten days, mostly through the more traditional dinghy makers, yacht builders and chandlers. More than ever before, however, the Boarding Generation is being heard above the spray.

CORRECTION

The photograph of the Hale Bopp comet over Stonehenge (Magazine, Saturday, December 27, 1997) should have been credited to the Associated Press news agency.

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'Smart' yoghurt tricks dieters into feeling full

BY PAUL DURMAN AND DAMIAN WHITWORTH

A YOGHURT that is said to trick the brain into thinking the stomach is full went on sale in Sweden yesterday at twice the price of normal yoghurts. It is due to be introduced in Britain later this year.

The latest "smart-food" development in dietary aids relies on an ingredient called Olibra developed by Scotia Holdings, a British drug company. The yoghurt Maval - Swedish for "feeling good" - is being made with a Swedish dairy company. Last night, nutritionists in Britain called for more tests.

Olibra works by encouraging the small intestine to release peptides that tell the brain the body is full. People who took part in trials in Northern Ireland felt less hungry even four hours after eating yoghurt containing Olibra than those who ate

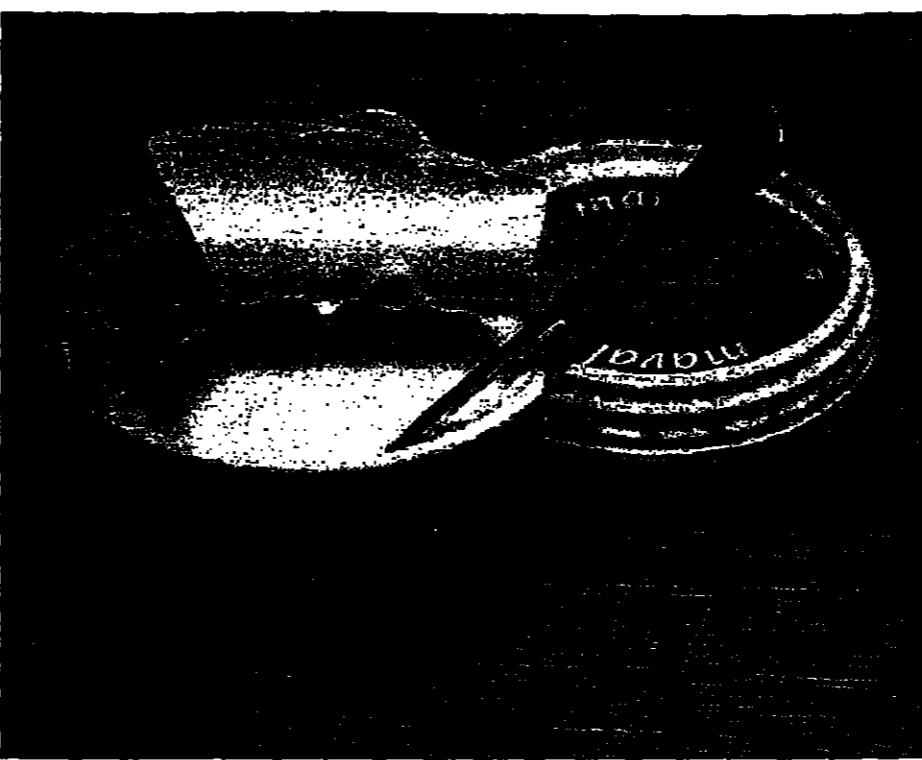
SWEET-TOOTHED

Britons spent more than £5 billion on sweets and chocolate last year. The 1997 Confectionery Market Review showed that we each eat an average of 16kg in sweets per year, the most in the world. Cadbury's Dairy Milk continues to be the bestselling chocolate, followed by Mars and Twix, the bestselling sweet is Wrigley's Extra chewing gum.

results were even more marked among women testers: they reduced their overall calorie intake at the buffet by 22 per cent after eating yoghurt containing Olibra. The British company argues there are no concerns for safety because the creamy emulsion that is at the heart of the yoghurt is based on a mixture of palm oil and oat oil, which occur naturally.

However, Amanda Wynne of the British Nutrition Foundation said she was concerned that the test results on the yoghurt had not been subjected to a proper peer review.

Ton Sanders, professor of nutrition at Kings College, London, said: "These short-term studies don't reflect what happens in the longer term. They are hyping it up to go on the market flogging it as a functional ingredient in food. To me, it stinks of snake oil



Maval was on sale in Sweden yesterday: nutritionists want more research

and cashing in on obesity, which is really a very serious problem."

David Horrobin, who has recently stepped down as Scotia's chief executive, said that unlike the appetite-suppressing drugs that have caused heart problems, Scotia's Olibra emulsion works by speeding up the natural actions of the small intestine. Scotia said that other prod-

ucts ranging from fruit drinks, soups, biscuits and even the holy grail of simmers - chocolate that helps people to lose weight - could be launched in Britain soon. Dr Robert Dow, of Scotia, said the product was not a weight loss miracle for overweight people, but could help people maintain a healthy diet.

"Obesity is the largest health problem in the devel-

oped world," he said. "We have to teach people to diet better, exercise better, and not to eat too much food in the first place. This will be one of the ways of helping them to do this. It could help them to lose weight."

Dr Dow said that discussions on introducing the product on to the British market would begin once its popularity in Sweden was tested.

Aldwych bus bomb survivor died an addict

BY PETER FOSTER

A HEROIN addict who tried to give up his habit after he survived the Aldwych bus bomb in central London died because of "inadequate care" at a private hospital, an inquest was told yesterday.

Brendan Woolhead, 34, signed up for a controversial new detoxification treatment six months after suffering head and pelvic injuries in the February 1996 bomb blast that killed an IRA terrorist.

The inquest heard how the he and Gillian Cox, the mother of his son, moved to London after hearing about the revolutionary new treatment for addicts that cost £4,700 and was available only at private clinics. Ultra Rapid Opiate Detoxification treats addicts using a cocktail of drugs under general anaesthetic that is designed to block the uptake of heroin in the brain and reduce withdrawal symptoms.

At an earlier hearing the Westminster inquest was told how Woolhead checked into the London Wellbeck Hospital in Marylebone on October 3,

1996. When the anaesthetic wore off he was taken from intensive care to his room. Later he complained of a headache, had a seizure and died of a heart attack, despite the efforts of medical crews.

Last April the inquest was adjourned after two days and the case file referred to the Crown Prosecution Service after two leading medical experts said they believed Woolhead's death had been caused by "reckless" and "grossly negligent" behaviour by the hospital. Yesterday police told Dr Paul Knapman, the coroner, that no criminal charges would be bought.

A post-mortem examination showed that Woolhead had taken heroin between coming round from the anaesthetic and his death 12 hours later.

Returning a verdict of misadventure, the jury said Woolhead had died from "a heart attack and a fit resulting from inadequate care". His family said they would be taking action against the hospital.

£239,000 sea search for lost sailor ends at council house

BY BILL HOFFMANN

A MOBILE telephone call to coastguards early yesterday morning sparked a major search and rescue operation for a lone sailor cast adrift in mountainous seas off the coast of Ireland.

The caller said that his 42ft catamaran, the Naomi, was taking on water and had lost power, knocking out all navigational and communication aids. He rang back a short time later, saying that he was talking to his liferaft and believed he was somewhere near Rathlin Island, off Northern Ireland's Co Antrim coast.

For six hours, two RAF Nimrods, two air force helicopters, a Royal Navy helicopter, 30 lifeboats and 100 emergency personnel combed the storm-whipped seas between Northern Ireland and Scotland searching for the stricken sailor. As darkness threatened to hinder the operation police called in a mobile phone expert to try to trace the man's position. The signal led police to a council house in Ingle, near Preston, Lancashire.

Police broke in and found a man in the living room with a mobile phone and a bottle of rum. Last night a police spokesman said the cost of the six-hour operation - the largest rescue operation at sea in the past three years - was calculated at more than £239,000.

The two RAF helicopters cost £2,500 an hour to operate and up to 30 lifeboats includ-

ing five all-weather craft which cost £5,800 each with crews and equipment to dispatch.

A spokesman for the Coastguard said: "Normally it is quite easy to spot a hoax call by checking the phone number or asking people about landmarks they can see, but this was a very elaborate and well-planned hoax."

Colin Duncan, Belfast coastguard district controller said: "Can I give a reasonable explanation as to why he did it? No I can't. But he put a lot of lives in jeopardy with his actions."

Authorities acted with extra urgency to dispatch rescue teams because of a dire weather, forecast that predicted a fierce frontal storm system by nightfall in the Irish sea.

The Coastguard last year received 11,291 calls, of which 251 were hoaxes.

A spokesman for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, which was involved in the search, said: "The Coastguard is the eyes and the ears of any sea alert and we obviously do get involved in hoaxes. When the weather gets bad like this we always get more calls from strange people who seem to get some kick out of it. Maybe these people should think of the lives they put at risk before making that call."

A man is due to appear before magistrates today on charges under Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act 1984.

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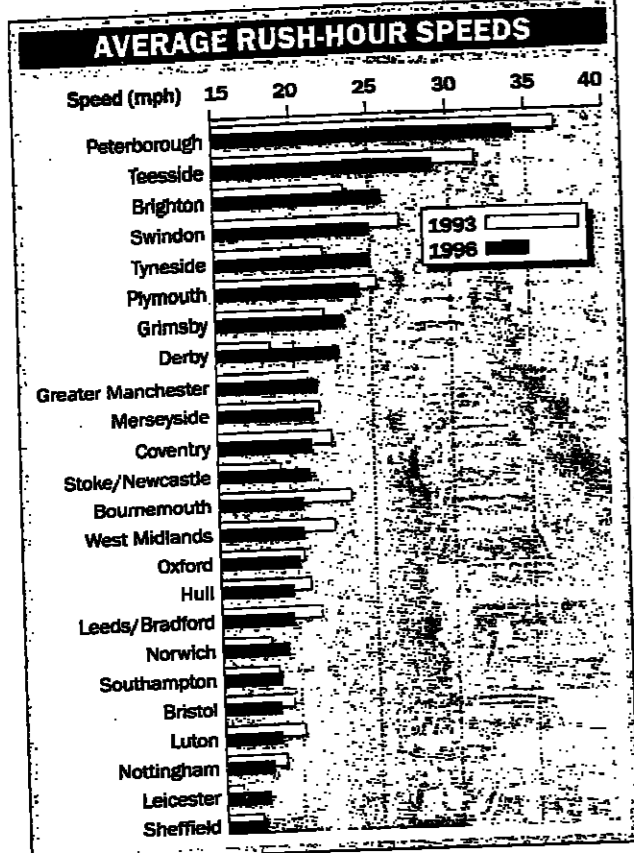
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Britain takes the slow road to clearer cities

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT



MOTORISTS who boil over when crawling along in rush-hour traffic should steer clear of Sheffield. It has the worst average speed outside London — a measly 17 mph for the daily grind to and from work. Compare that to Peterborough, where drivers can bowl along at an average 34 mph, largely thanks to a network of relatively modern dual carriageways.

However, while rush-hour speeds actually increased in Sheffield from 1993 to 1996, those in Peterborough, the fastest-moving town of 24 surveyed by the Government in the two years, decreased from 37 mph. Also, while retaining the top spot for off-peak periods as well, it has shown the biggest reduction in traffic speeds — 5 mph — in this category.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, and other transport ministers are examining traffic trends as they prepare a White Paper intended to change public attitudes to the car. It is the steps taken by conurbations at the slowest

end of the list that have impressed them the most. Many, including Sheffield, Leicester, Nottingham, Bristol and Southampton, are pioneering schemes to clear roads of unnecessary traffic. Results from many of these schemes, which include park-and-ride projects, traffic charging and improved public transport, are only now beginning to filter through — too late for the 1996 survey.

What the survey does show is a general reduction in speed in most of the towns and cities. 14 recorded a slowing down over three years. Separate studies are conducted into London rush-hour speeds, which have fallen to 11 mph.

In spite of the traffic pressures on some of England's biggest cities, drivers can fare better than those in smaller conurbations: Manchester and Tyneside actually speeded up between 1993 and 1996, thanks in part to improved bus services, seen as the best way to get cars off the roads.

Letters, page 21



One of the few: Claire Drew in the RAF helmet she is helping to develop

Mother aims to be a social engineer

BY LYN JENKINS

A WORKING mother was named Young Woman Engineer of the Year yesterday, and will serve as a role model to attract more women into the profession. Girls are ahead of boys in mathematics and sciences at school, yet only 14 per cent of engineers are female.

Claire Drew, 30, is a systems engineering manager with GEC Marconi Avionics, involved in developing a helmet-mounted display for RAF pilots. After leaving school in Liverpool, she took an HND in electrical and electronic engineering before joining British Aerospace. She said: "I have not been discriminated against. I enjoyed maths and physics at school, and I had encouragement at home."

While she works, her daughter, Natalie, three, is with her husband, a security watch manager at Dover coastguard station, or her mother, who lives near by.

GEOGRAPHERS' CONFERENCE

Living rough boosts death rate 40 times

REPORTS BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

MEN living rough are almost 40 times more likely to die young than contemporaries who have secure homes, the geographers' conference at the University of Surrey was told yesterday. Those who live in hostels fare better but still have a ten times higher chance of dying prematurely.

Daniel Dorling of the University of Bristol, Nic Brimblecombe and Mary Shaw set out to discover why there were such wide discrepancies in death rates in different electoral wards of Oxford and Brighton. The explanation turned out to be simple: the presence of a hostel or a large number of bed-sits used as temporary accommodation.

Closed-circuit TV spreading in city centres

CLOSED-circuit TV cameras are spreading like a rash. From 78 schemes in 1994 there are now more than 450, Dr Mark Goodwin of the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, told the conference.

"Bournemouth has 200 cameras installed; King's Lynn more than 70. As soon as one area has cameras, other neighbouring areas feel more anxious about crime and want them too."

They were particularly effective in deterring rowdiness in city centres after closing time. But the indications were that they displaced crime into neighbouring areas, he said.

Deaths in the ward of South Oxford are 40 per cent higher than average, while those in North Oxford are 40 per cent lower. The reason is the presence of a hostel in South Oxford which, despite the attempts of staff to help the homeless, fails to bring their death rate down to anywhere near national averages.

The national death rate for men aged between 16 and 29 is 11.1 per thousand per year. Among those on the street, the figure is 41.1. In hostels, it is 11.3.

In older men the gap narrows, so that among those on the street, aged between 30 and 44, some 71.9 per thousand die, compared with the national average of 23.3 per thousand. In those aged between 45 and 65, the rate is 157.6 per thousand, compared with the national average of 7.6.

When all age groups up to 65 are considered as a whole, their death rate is 25 times the average. The finding goes some way towards explaining higher death rates in towns, since the homeless tend to migrate towards places where it is easier to find support by begging, or from charities or social services.

The problem is compounded by the fact that people living on the streets, who face the greatest risk, find it hardest to get a doctor. GPs do not receive their usual payments for treating people who do not have an address.

Two wheels good, say the ramblers

RAMBLERS and mountain-bikers can be friends, despite reports that cyclists were annoying walkers by churning up the countryside.

Andrew Dougill of Salford University and Matt Strick of Leeds University told the geographers' conference that they had found no animosity between the groups. On the contrary, there was a feeling of camaraderie.

In their study of the Lake District, it emerged that the presence of other people with a common interest in the outdoors appeared to override the feeling that bicycles were out of place on the fells. Of 50 people interviewed, only two volunteered any criticism of mountain-bikers. "So long as the cyclists are courteous and show a respect for the countryside, a community feeling develops," Dr Dougill said.

The fast way to enli

clergyman says BBC is singing praises of war

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مكتبة من الكتب

The fast (but slow) way to enlightenment

Michael Horsnell on how a Buddhist shed weight from body and mind

BACK home in Britain, everyone was indulging themselves with festive treats. High on a Japanese mountain, Paul Adler-Collins, former sergeant and failed businessman, sat lost in thought, cold and very, very hungry.

Now the man who turned to Buddhism to deal with his problems has become the first to complete a 100-day fast for 36 years. His meditating experience took the weight off his mind and off his body. He was 20 stone when he started. After three months of drinking only rice water and sitting in the lotus position for up to 24 hours a day, he is down to 12 stone. All his fillings fell out, and he can eat only baby food until his system recovers, but otherwise his health is said to be good.

Mr Adler-Collins, whose wife fed him fish and chips in preparation for the ordeal, will be honoured with a high priesthood for succeeding where others have failed or died. Recovering on the island of Kyushu yesterday, he said: "The biggest problem has been the cold. I was allowed no heating in my shelter and the temperature was as low as minus two with rain, sleet and hail. At one point, I felt it was getting dangerous. I could feel hypothermia coming on. It



During the fast: "It strips away layers of yourself"

seems to strip away layers and layers of yourself and you find something else underneath. There is a voice telling you that you won't make it, that you're not good enough, but you dig deeper and deeper into your courage and bloody-mindedness. "Some of the experiences can best be described as out-of-body. At one point I became aware of great human misery in the world — picture after picture of suffering. It was like being beaten up. At other times it is like breaking through a barrier and seeing

different worlds and beings full of love for humanity. It is fantastic."

Mr Adler-Collins, whose adopted holy name is Je Kan, is set to become the first European leader of his chosen Shingon Mikkyo branch of Buddhism. He was visited throughout by his Japanese teacher, or sensei, who brought rice water and guided his meditation.

His German wife Helma, 45, also a Buddhist priest, said she was proud of him and looking forward to his return to the Laurel Farm temple and

healing clinic they have built near Bath. She said: "It is a good thing he was so tubby to begin with, but he is very strong. I tried to feed him up with fish and chips before he left. I was worried at times but now I am very proud."

Mr Adler-Collins was invalided out of the Royal Army Medical Corps after a gardening accident when a lawnmower spat a stone into his leg. His freight company subsequently failed when he was defrauded. His first marriage collapsed and he was left homeless. He grew interested in Buddhism and became a Shingon Mikkyo priest while visiting Japan.

Dietary experts said his survival was extraordinary and possible only because he had been so overweight. Dr Andrew Prentice, a nutrition expert at the Dunn Clinical Medicine Centre at Cambridge, said: "It is a very edgy and dangerous thing to do. Rice water can contain a lot of carbohydrates and salts that can make a difference. Without any energy being taken in, you are not likely to live much longer than 50 days. After a few days, the brain patterns change. That is thought to be why fasting brings sensations of spiritual insight."



Before: 20-stone Paul Adler-Collins, whose wife built him up with fish and chips

Stowaways delivered direct to the cells

FOUR stowaways had a shock when the lorry in which they were hiding reversed up to a building and they jumped out — inside a police station.

The four men, believed to be Albanian illegal immigrants, were led straight into the cells after a quick-thinking lorry driver heard noises in the back of his lorry and drove to the police station.

The Belgian lorry driver, who works for a haulage company based in Lancashire, had crossed the English Channel unaware that he had company in the back of the vehicle until he stopped on the M4 motorway at Reading, Berkshire, on Wednesday afternoon.

He heard the sound of foreign chatter and called police on a mobile phone.

A spokesman for Reading police said: "We decided we didn't want to run the risk of having to chase stowaways across the motorway, so told him to drive to the back of the town's police station."

"He backed his vehicle up to the cell area and we opened the back doors. The four men, aged between 17 and 25, looked very surprised and were taken straight into the cells."

"We are trying to find an interpreter for them and they will be handed over to the Immigration Department tonight and will probably be sent back to Albania."

Clergyman says BBC is singing praises of war

By Gillian Harris, Scotland Correspondent

THE BBC's *Songs of Praise* has been accused of blasphemy by a leading Scottish clergyman — after an edition of the programme was filmed at a nuclear submarine base.

The Rev Maxwell Craig, general secretary of Churches Together in Scotland, which embraces all Christian denominations, claims that scenes filmed on board a Trident nuclear submarine at the Faslane base in the Clyde are "deeply insensitive, bordering on blasphemous."

He has asked the BBC to cancel the programme, which is due to be broadcast from West Kirk in Helensburgh on Sunday. "Showing footage from a nuclear submarine indicates a clear relationship between the worship of God and a weapon of mass destruction which is blasphemous," Mr Craig said.

"This is likely to cause widespread resentment throughout Scottish churches. All the churches in Scotland have been very clear in their forthright opposition to Trident. Seeing a programme like this will puzzle people. It will look as if we've changed our minds."

The BBC has refused to consider scrapping the programme. Andrew Barr, the producer of *Songs of Praise*, said: "Maxwell Craig appears

to have misunderstood the purpose of the programme. We interviewed people whose lives are spent on submarines because they were introduced to us as Christians. It is not a critique of the defence strategy of this country."

The programme, presented by Sally Magnusson, also contains an interview with Father Ben Franklin, the first chaplain in Britain to be based on board a submarine. Mr Barr said: "Really it is just a perfectly normal *Songs of Praise*, filming people from the community at work. I am surprised to have this sort of reaction to a programme which no one has ever seen."

But Mr Craig insists the programme should not be aired. "So often the churches end up complaining and whinging after the event. This time we have an opportunity to prevent it happening which is what we hope to do," he said.

It is not the first time *Songs of Praise* has generated controversy with its choice of venue. Last year the programme was broadcast from a beer tent in Finsbury Park, London, which alarmed the local clergy. Other unusual locations have included Heathrow Airport, Old Trafford football stadium and a chocolate factory.

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Hide may paint for penance

THE boxer Herbie Hide will complete a community service order by carrying out gardening and decorating work with other offenders. Hide, 26, holder of one of the world's heavyweight titles, was given a 60-hour community service order by Norwich magistrates last month after admitting using threatening behaviour to two police officers. He had hoped to serve his sentence doing fitness work with youngsters. However, Pip Coker, a senior Norfolk probation officer, said: "We don't have any fitness projects. The work people are assigned is along the lines of decorating for the elderly, or gardening."

Insurance man 'threatened to kill colleagues'

By PAUL WILKINSON

A SUCCESSFUL financial expert sent a series of death threats to colleagues after being suspended just as he was due to fly off with his wife on a company trip to Mexico, a court heard yesterday.

The letters allegedly sent by Richard Burrell to his former colleagues at Legal and General, Britain's second largest insurance company, had a computer-generated picture of a bullet with the words "Death where is thy sting?" and the letters "RIP" below, Leeds Crown Court was told.

Alan Pirie, Mr Burrell's manager and one of the five colleagues who received the threats, received a further anonymous letter in which the writer told how he had bought a 9mm Beretta pistol and said: "It's surprising how easy it is to get hold of a gun these days. There are so many psychopaths about. It's quite worrying to think who could be blown away when someone with a grudge decides there isn't anything left to live for."

Yesterday Mr Burrell, 43, from Bridlington, East Yorkshire, denied six charges of making a threat to kill. Henry Prosser, for the prosecution, said that in May 1995

Mr Burrell and his wife were included in a party from Legal and General offices for the trip to Mexico as a reward for achieving good sales figures.

Seven consultants and their partners were due to fly from Heathrow, but at the last moment Mr Burrell and his wife were barred from the flight.

Later that day Paul O'Hara, Legal and General's North Eastern area manager, rang to tell Mr Burrell he was suspended. Mr Prosser said: "The defendant's response, which was noted down by Mr O'Hara, was that the Legal and General would suffer, and he would sue them for stress, and Alan Pirie would get his lights kicked out."

Four days later Mr O'Hara received a letter saying, "Dear Paul, tell them thanks from me for the heart attack, the extra expense, the waiting around, the stress of trying to keep calm. I will never forgive them for it. Someone will pay dearly for this in retribution."

Ten months later in February 1996 after Mr Burrell had left the company, Mr Pirie and four other consultants received the bullet pictures. Two, addressed to David

Moorhouse and Karen Drinkwater went to the company offices in Leeds, but the others, to Mr Pirie, Andrew McArdle and Raymond Connelly, went to their homes. Mr Connelly's name was misspelt in a particular way and he would say that Burrell was the only person who ever wrote his name like that.

Later that month Mr Pirie received a second letter, talking about the Beretta handgun. "That was a threatening and disturbing letter," said Mr Prosser who told how Mr Burrell set out to lay a false trail.

He went to Bridlington police and showed them a computer-generated picture of a bullet which he said he had been sent. "He told him he had no idea who had sent it but it could possibly be a work colleague," said Mr Prosser.

Mr O'Hara, when asked by John Elvidge, for the defence, why Mr Burrell had been suspended, replied: "I couldn't specifically give a reason. I didn't know. I was just given the instruction to relay it to Mr Burrell." He agreed that Mr Burrell was very successful with Legal and General. The trial continues.



"There are so many psychopaths about," Richard Burrell is alleged to have written

IN BRIEF Man jailed for road rage attack with brick

A van driver who threw a half-brick from a bridge at a lorry on the M2 in a road rage incident was jailed for 2½ years at Maidstone Crown Court. Clive Masters, 40, from Gillingham, Kent, who had been playing cat-and-mouse with Michael Ruckles, from Sheppey, Kent, denied damaging property being reckless as to whether life was endangered.

Royal rejection

Colin Fellowes, 60, who claims to be the illegitimate son of Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson, lost his battle at Portsmouth County Court to challenge the monarchy for ownership of Balmoral and Sandringham.

Bingo row

Muslims in Bradford have asked the owners of the Mecca Bingo chain to change the name of one of its halls because they are offended by it. Luton Muslims made a similar approach concerning a hall there.

Rapist jailed

Robin Spanner, 61, a taxi driver from North End, Portsmouth, was jailed for five years by Winchester Crown Court for raping a 12-year-old girl he met through the Children of God sect 30 years ago. He had admitted assault.

Constable sale

A church court has agreed to allow All Saints Church in Fecring, Essex, to sell a Constable painting of the risen Christ, which hung above the altar, to raise money for heating and repairs. It is expected to fetch about £80,000.

Bird a-laying

Twelfth night has come and gone, but a 35ft Christmas tree will stay on the steps of Norwich City Hall for six weeks after a blackbird built a nest in it and laid at least two eggs, four months ahead of schedule.

Climber falls

Martin Moran, 44, a leading British mountaineer, suffered a fractured wrist, elbow, pelvis and ribs after falling about 30ft from the roof of his house in Lecharron, Wester Ross. He had been fixing slates.

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14,000 children call ChildLine to report bullying

THE number of children reporting bullying has risen by alarming levels despite new guidelines to schools on how best to prevent it, the charity ChildLine said, yesterday. While the number of children it counselled rose by 14 per cent last year, the number of calls from bullying victims rose by 40 per cent. More than 14,000 rang the free telephone line to say they were being bullied, and many of the 10,500 calls made to express concern about another child also dealt with bullying. The problem came second only to physical or sexual abuse by adults. The figures will give urgency to Government plans to issue updated guidelines on combating bullying in schools, announced by the Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett in September last year. Valerie Howarth, chief executive of ChildLine, said that schools were failing to prevent bullying both inside and outside their gates. "Despite the fact there is now excellent guidance available to schools, children are still ringing us, desperate because they are being bullied and don't know how to stop it," she said. "We adults would not simply ignore it if, when we went to work, colleagues jeered at us daily, or refused to speak to us for months on end, threatened us with violence and blackmailed or robbed us. Yet all these things are happening to some children, every day." Mary MacLeod, director of policy and research at the charity, said that more reporting could indicate some success in anti-bullying initiatives. Some schools were seeing dramatic results from anti-bullying measures such as anonymous "bully-boxes" and peer counselling.

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So, class, you think you've got it tough ...

Mark Henderson reports on a trip to New York designed to show children from a problem estate the criminal effects of true deprivation

A PARTY of teenagers from a council estate notorious for its crime and poverty are to be taken to the Bronx in New York by their American teacher to show them the effects of serious deprivation.

Jim Roberson, 38, who was born and raised in the infamous New York borough, is to lead the party of 37 from King Richard Secondary School in Portsmouth over the half-term break in February. He hopes the teenagers, most of whom live on the troubled Paulsgrove estate, will come back with a new awareness of the realities of genuine poverty and the damage crime can do to a community.

"We hope this trip will plant

positive seeds in them of what they could do with their lives," Mr Roberson said. "Sometimes they think they have a bad lot but they need to see there are people who might be worse off than they are. New York might make them think Paulsgrove isn't so bad."

King Richard finished third from bottom in the city in the latest *Times* league tables, 25 per cent of pupils gaining 5 GCSE passes at grade A to C. Paulsgrove is well-known as a problem estate: unemployment runs at 7 per cent and it has an unenviable crime rate. A pub on the estate, The Sociable Flower, was recently closed after a string of violent incidents.

Mr Roberson, though, thinks hardship on the estate will be put firmly in perspective by conditions in the Bronx, where one in ten adults has no job, fewer than one in five own their own home and crime is endemic. "They will see the whole thing, see what crime does, how it messes everything up," he said. "You don't know how good you got it until you see someone else's stuff."

The problems he encountered growing up in the Bronx dwarfed those he sees in Portsmouth. "My quality of life has improved since I came here. I'm the first person in our family to own a lawnmower."

"I was lucky in a way. My cousin in the Bronx became involved with a black mafia gang. He had been a cop but got involved with drugs in



The effects of crime in the Bronx, epitomised by this commemoration to four boys shot dead, will be only too clear to the pupils, below, with Roberson



Jim Roberson at play growing up in the Bronx

Harlem and ended up organising hitmen to take people out. He's now doing 57 years in a federal prison."

Two local police officers, four youth workers and parents and teachers will accompany the teenagers on the visit, which will take in a professional basketball match and a visit to Washington DC. The police have donated £200 towards the cost of the trip. PC Simon Paine said: "We hope it will help us to get into a informal dialogue with them about how their behaviour

affects us and how our behaviour affects them."

The teenagers, many of whom have taken holiday and Saturday jobs to save the £400 the trip will cost, said it would be the chance of a lifetime. Most have never been abroad. Terry Clark, 16, said: "I'm more excited about it than I was about Christmas. I'm saving most of my Christmas money." Lisa Sigale, 14, said: "It'll be a really big city atmosphere. I've never been to a city that big."

The trip will include a visit to the John F Kennedy High School in the Bronx, which has 5,000 pupils and an ethnic mix of 71 per cent Hispanic, 19 per cent black, 5 per cent white and 5 per cent Asian and native American. Twelve of King Richard's 982 pupils are black or Asian.

Mr Roberson, who is an African-American, said of the trip: "Hopefully they will learn that not every black man on the streets will try to mug them."



Education, page 41

The lawless lions' den that takes a pride in its notoriety

FROM TUNIKI VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

"THE Bronx? No thank!" Ogden Nash once wrote in rhyme — and with reason. A borough of staggering extremes, the Bronx is home to such New York institutions as the Yankee Stadium, the Botanical Garden and the Bronx Zoo, as well as being a global symbol of crime, decay, violence and social meltdown. The film *Fort Apache, The Bronx*

was made there in 1980, starring Paul Newman as a police officer whose routine duties include disarming deranged, knife-wielding thugs, saving single mothers from suicide, chasing muggers, nabbing pimps and arresting prostitutes. The film was regarded as a not-inaccurate portrayal of life in the Bronx.

The borough's notoriety, carefully preserved by its many lawless denizens — particularly in the South Bronx, whose streets are reputed to

THE BRONX	
JFK High School	
Number of pupils	5,000
Number of teachers	250
Non-white pupils	95%
Unemployment	10%
Home ownership	16%
Murders (Bronx, 1995)	361

PORTSMOUTH	
King Richard School	
Number of pupils	982
Number of teachers	58
Non-white pupils	1%
Unemployment	7%
Home ownership	49%
Murders (Portsmouth, 1995)	3

be less safe than the lion's cage in the zoo — was also enhanced a decade ago with the publication of Tom Wolfe's

bestselling novel *Bongfire of the Vanities*. The borough is New York's second smallest and the only one

attached to the American mainland. Bought by the Dutch West India Company in 1639 from the Algonquin Indians — who also, rather more rashly, sold Manhattan — it was first settled in 1644 by one Jonas Bronck, who bequeathed his name to the area.

Its decay began in the 1950s, when the era of cheap cars allowed the relatively affluent and tightly knit white community to leave for the countryside. The area was gradually colonised by the poor and given

over to vast, soul-numbing housing projects. The "no hope" flavour has never since been lost.

There has been talk in recent years of a revival, although it would appear to be grounded more in rhetoric than fact. More than \$1 billion has been spent on the area since 1986 in an attempt to ensure "urban regeneration". This, on the whole, has taken the form of campaigns to remove graffiti from walls that seldom stay clean for more than 48 hours.

John Ashton, chairman of Bristol's education committee, said: "What Chris is doing is brilliant. It is exactly the sort of leadership needed to deliver in a difficult area."

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Juggling is just the trick for struggling pupils

By DAVID CHARTER

PUPILS and teachers at a failing secondary school with some of the country's worst results are being taught ... to juggle. The circus skills technique has been adopted by Chris Lindup, head teacher of Merrywood comprehensive school, to raise self-esteem. The school came second from bottom in Bristol in last summer's GCSEs and inspectors found that up to half the pupils played truant.

Mr Lindup arrived in September having won praise for transforming morale and results at his previous school in the city, Lawrence Weston Comprehensive, which was saved from closure. First he taught juggling to all 70 staff at Merrywood — including teachers, caretakers and cleaners. The older pupils were taught before Christmas and the rest of the 415 children will learn this term.

Mr Lindup said: "The aim is help people raise their own personal performance by increasing their self-belief. The juggling is an important part of it because when you drop a juggling ball you can find out from where it landed where you went wrong when you threw it."

He added: "I use it as an analogy for a lot of concepts — that there is no such thing as failure, only feedback."

School inspectors found literacy and numeracy standards were well below standard at Merrywood, which is located in the Knowle West area of Bristol, where there is 12.5 per cent unemployment. Just 8 per cent of pupils gained five GCSEs at grades A to C last summer.

Mr Lindup said regaining self-esteem was the key to rekindling the desire to learn. He said the juggling was already producing results. "The kids love it and you hear them talking about it in the corridors — it gives them goals and shows them they can achieve things," he said.

John Ashton, chairman of Bristol's education committee, said: "What Chris is doing is brilliant. It is exactly the sort of leadership needed to deliver in a difficult area."

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living

ART DEADLINE IS ON
YS AWAY

Santer lavishes praise on Blair's 'dynamic' nation

JACQUES SANTER hailed Tony Blair as "dynamic, vibrant and creative" yesterday, signalling the warmest relations between Brussels and Britain for more than a decade.

During a day of mutual backslapping, the President of the European Commission welcomed Mr Blair's refreshing approach to the European Union, making clear his relief that he had replaced John Major.

At the launch of Britain's presidency of the European Union, Mr Blair insisted that his Government sought a "strong and leading role in shaping Europe's future", as he and most of the Cabinet met 20 EU commissioners to discuss the programme for the coming six months.

Mr Blair said that since Labour had won the election there had been a new era of "good and close relations with the ministers and European commissioners across a whole range of issues".

The display of friendship continued throughout the day, with Mr Santer, insisting that there were "no clouds" between them. The next six months, however, will be dominated by three issues on which Britain is out of tune

Jill Sherman and Charles

Bremner on the remarkable thaw in relations with Brussels

with Brussels: the single currency, the beef crisis and immigration controls. Although the Government's decision to stay out of monetary union is casting a shadow over its turn in the presidency, its stewardship is also being welcomed. The Prime Minister and what the French call "le Blairisme" are widely viewed across Europe as a strong, modernising force that could rub off on other governments. British enthusiasm for market forces, though a source of resentment in France, Belgium and parts of Germany, is expected to help to speed the drive for deregulation and broadening the unfinished single market.

After a succession of smaller state presidencies, Britain's

international clout and admired diplomatic expertise are being counted on to help the EU assert itself abroad. Already the Foreign Office has its hands full finding a way to handle Algeria's civil conflict and dealing with Turkey and the linked emergency of the influx of Kurdish refugees. Both items have the potential for hijacking the EU agenda in coming weeks.

The Americans are likely to listen harder to an EU represented by Britain when it comes to tackling the string of trade disputes that are souring relations. In Asia Britain can help to allay the spreading belief that Europe is turning inward, obsessed with monetary union and its unemployment agony.

Yesterday Mr Santer played down disagreements on the single currency, insisting that Britain could still play an active part in the initial stages. He appeared unconcerned by possible problems ahead, although Mr Blair had again urged Brussels to end the ban on British beef, and also appeared to back demands by Germany for tighter border controls.

Mr Santer told Mr Blair: "The new positive approach you are following on Euro-



Presidency of the

Presidential friends: Tony Blair and Jacques Santer at the launch in London yesterday of Britain's six-month spell at the EU's helm

pean issues is as refreshing as it is highly appreciated. The next half year is a welcome opportunity to advance the cause of European integration, and to transmit to the peoples of Europe that same spirit of dynamism, vigour, creativity that is once again the hallmark of the United Kingdom today."

Going out of his way to smooth over difficulties on the single currency, he told BBC Radio: "I am quite clear that Britain will do its utmost to

play a full and constructive role in making the launch of EMU a success."

He challenged Mr Blair to take the opportunity provided by the next six months, to banish the image of Brussels as a bureaucratic organ and present it as a political organisation aimed at improving the lives of European citizens.

Yesterday afternoon Mr Blair told a press conference: "The presidency presents a very great opportunity for Britain to show that by being

constructive, engaged and positive in Europe, we can play a leading role in shaping Europe's future on the issues that really matter to people - jobs, crime, environment and how people compete best in the changing world economy. "I have no doubt at all that we will show and demonstrate to the whole of Europe the competence and constructive approach that should mark any successful presidency."

Kurdish refugees, page 16

BRITAIN'S SIX-MONTH EU PRESIDENCY

JANUARY
3 Britain takes over the reins from Luxembourg, previous holders of the presidency.
23-26 Jack Straw heads an informal meeting of home affairs ministers in Birmingham. Key topics include the battle against drugs and crime, with the Home Secretary pushing for greater cross-border co-operation against organised criminals.

FEBRUARY
9 Robin Cook travels to Costa Rica for a meeting of EU foreign ministers. The San José group of Central American countries.
9-11 Conference to discuss the European Social Fund in Birmingham.
12 Mr Cook goes to Panama for a meeting of EU ministers. A meeting of Latin American countries.

MARCH
3-7 Lord Simon of Highgate heads an informal meeting of EU ministers in London. Key topics include the single market, rules and disciplines on football, football police force and European police force.
12-14 Gordon Brown heads an informal meeting of finance ministers in London. In New York, an informal meeting of EU ministers to discuss the possibility of a non-EU event but it is counted on to be a success. The day also marks the 50th anniversary of the Schuman day, one of the founding fathers of the European Union.

APRIL
6-7 Two-day seminar in London on 'Enterprise Europe', with American and Asian guest speakers advising Europe on how to promote an enterprise economy.

MAY
13-14 Gordon Brown heads an informal meeting of finance ministers in London. In New York, an informal meeting of EU ministers to discuss the possibility of a non-EU event but it is counted on to be a success. The day also marks the 50th anniversary of the Schuman day, one of the founding fathers of the European Union.

JUNE
6-9 John Prescott heads an informal meeting of ministers on regional policy in Glasgow.
13-14 End-of-presidency summit of EU heads of state and Government in Cardiff. This is the climax of Britain's six-month tenure.
20-22 Jack Cunningham chairs another meeting of agriculture ministers in Luxembourg.
23 Intergovernmental conference in London to begin negotiations with Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia for their possible entry to the EU.

Latest information on British presidency can be found on website <http://presid.fco.gov.uk>

Japan to be told Britain is best for investment

By Philip Webster and Robert Whyman

TONY BLAIR will tell Japanese companies today that Britain remains the right place for them to invest in Europe in spite of Labour's decision to stay out of the single currency.

The Prime Minister flew to Japan last night intending to highlight both Britain's favourable position as a gateway to the European market and the constructive role it will play over the launch of economic and monetary union. In a speech today at the start of his five-day visit he will declare: "Britain is not just a safe bet with a Labour Government but a better bet."

Trade heads Mr Blair's agenda and his first meeting in Tokyo today will be with Hiroshi Okuda, president of Toyota, which recently announced it was building a new 2,000-job assembly plant in northern France rather than Britain. Toyota is expected to confirm at the meeting that it will invest a further £240 million in its engine plant in North Wales.

The company, Japan's largest carmaker, is understood to have delayed the announcement until Mr Blair's visit at the request of Downing Street. The publicity will reinforce the Prime Minister's message that Britain under Labour is a good place to invest. Helping him to convince Japanese companies of that will be a delegation of 12 leading businessmen, including Sir Colin Marshall, president of the CBI, and Sir Ian Vallance, chairman of BT.

During what is his first visit to Japan since becoming Prime Minister, Mr Blair will hold talks with his Japanese counterpart, Ryutaro Hashimoto, and other senior ministers. He will also take part in an EU-Japan summit with Mr Hashimoto and Jacques Santer, president of the European Commission, and will have an audience with Emperor Akihito at the Imperial Palace.

Mr Blair will launch a year-long festival of British art and culture, Festival UK 98, which is expected to include the same giddy presentation of modern Britain that Mr Blair displayed at the Commonwealth Conference, will include a portable pavilion that will be moved around Japan.

Stephenson's 'Rocked' will be on show and there will be Japanese premieres of British films, including *Besta* and *Spiceworld - the Movie*.

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SAISHO Telephone Last number redial. Model 471. SALE PRICE: £14.99	GEEMARC Telephone Available in Post. Model FLORENTE. Was £19.99. SALE PRICE: £5

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THE TIMES FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 1998

Balloon race bid fails to get off the ground

PETER NICHOLLS

THE race to make the first round-the-world trip by hot air balloon remains wide open after the latest attempt by an international team in the Swiss Alps failed before it began.

The crew of the *Breitling Orbiter 2*, which includes Andy Elson, a Briton, were last night coming to terms with an aborted launch after two of the connections at one end of the capsule, which would have carried the team of three, gave way within seconds when a crane began to unload it from a truck at the launch site at Château d'Oex in the Swiss Alps.

The crew — Mr Elson, Bertrand Piccard, the Swiss balloonist, and Wim Verstraeten, from Belgium — had expected near-ideal conditions for their flight. Southeasterly winds would have taken them directly towards Turkey instead of the scheduled detour to North Africa to pick up high-altitude jet stream currents.

They became the latest in a series of expensive attempts to make the first round-the-world journey by balloon.

But the three were relieved that the connections had not snapped in mid-air after today's planned launch as it is feared the capsule would have broken away from the balloon and plummeted to earth.

The repairs will not be completed until next week and the team say it will be Wednesday before they will be ready to fly — if the weather is good. Judging by recent attempts to circumnavigate the globe, however, their chances of success appear slim.

On Monday Steve Fossett, the American millionaire, was forced to abandon his fourth attempt to balloon round the globe. He was defeated by a

Swiss Alps launch is aborted after gondola connections snap, writes

Helen Rumbelow in Château d'Oex

combination of low winds, malfunctioning equipment and fuel shortage, and was forced down in Russia. Mr Fossett can at least find solace in being the holder of the record for the longest uninterrupted flight by hot air balloon. An attempt by his rival, Kevin Ullessi, was even shorter-lived when a burst helium container forced him on New Year's Day to abandon his attempt in Indiana after little more than two hours.

Balloon fever has been intensifying as teams rush to launch before February, when

It could have been so much worse if the damage had happened after the launch

the fast winter jet streams are disrupted by tropical storms. In December, Richard Branson was forced to abandon his latest attempt at the record after a large gust tore his balloon free from its moorings. He plans to make another attempt later this month, from Marrakesh.

Today the Americans Dick Rutan and Dave Melton plan to take off from Albuquerque, New Mexico. The competition between the rival teams is keen. After yesterday's disappointment,

Mr Piccard said that the fault, which will delay the launch by at least a week, was a living nightmare but they were now even with Richard Branson's *Virgin Global Challenger*.

"After having Richard Branson lose his envelope it's a pain for us to lose our gondola."

Mr Elson, a 44-year-old aeronautical engineer and balloon pilot from Wells, Somerset, said: "We have a potential season until the end of February and I would be surprised if the weather was not good at some time."

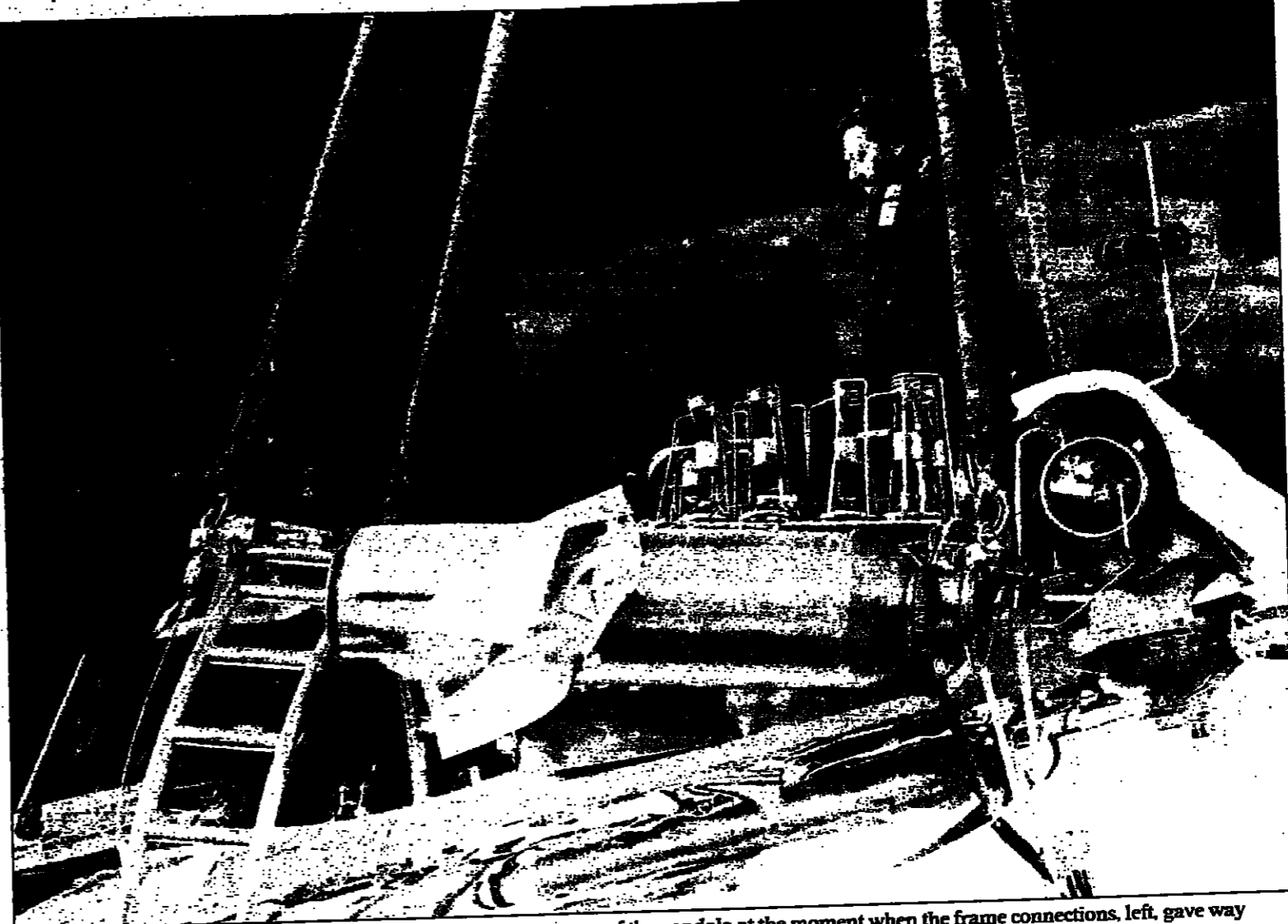
Explaining yesterday's mishap, he said: "For some reason the cable pulled out the fittings. We do not know why and we will have to investigate. We also have some repairs to make to heating pipes, which have been badly bent out of shape."

He said a Swiss company would now make some replacement bolts to fit to the side of the tiny living compartment so it could be properly connected to the balloon.

The launch director, Don Cameron, whose Bristol-based company Cameron Balloons made the balloon, struggled to hide his disappointment after the capsule dropped about eight inches and smashed on to the steel truck.

He said: "Maybe on the crane it was pulled a little bit to one side, but that should not have been a problem."

"It could have been so much worse if it had happened after the launch. We believe the



Andy Elson, the Briton in the *Breitling Orbiter 2* crew, on top of the gondola at the moment when the frame connections, left, gave way

damage to the capsule was slight. I'm sure the Civil Aviation Authority will be interested to understand that a certified part has failed in a manner which could have endangered air crew." He

refused to disclose the company involved and, when questioned about when the team might get airborne, he said that it was in the hands of the elements. "They will probably not fly on Wednesday

because the weather people say probably not," he said. Mr Elson, who started ballooning because his wife got seasick and he wanted to "sail in the sky", has already set himself a higher goal. "Once

we get the round-the-world thing out of the way, I'd like to go 80,000ft up into space where you can see the curvature of the Earth."

He is planning to do the flight solo, in an open basket,

using a space suit. He said: "Like Bertrand and Wim, I am severely disappointed."

Mr Piccard said: "Today was a nightmare and I hope the dream will come true in the next few weeks."

Kohl cuts short tax debate and leaves it to voters

FROM DEBORAH COLLETT IN FRANKFURT

THE German Government has handed the monumental decision on how to reform the country's cumbersome tax system to the voters in this year's general election.

Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor, announced that there would be no further debate with the Opposition on the issues of tax and welfare changes. He challenged Germans to back his party — which had tried to push through reforms aimed at

reviving investment and cutting record postwar unemployment.

"The decision... will have to be made by the voters on September 27," said Friedrich Bohl, the Chancellor's Minister. In a deliberately provocative move, which many in his Christian Democratic Union (CDU) hope will not backfire, the Chancellor is trusting that voters will have registered his constant message that inter-party talks foundered with the opposition Social Democrat (SPD) veto in the upper house.

The Government's decision con-

tradicts promises by both Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, and Wolfgang Schäuble, parliamentary leader of the CDU's coalition with its Bavarian sister party, the CSU. Both men promised before Christmas that all sides would meet for negotiations in 1998. "Now they've changed their minds, but then it was always clear that a compromise would never be reached," said Uwe Bahnsen, political editor of *Die Welt*.

The 15-year-old ruling alliance will revert to a plan, drawn up over a year ago, to cut income and corpo-

rate taxes, to raise indirect taxes and scrap innumerable tax breaks. Within this project, the Government wants to slice the top rate of income tax from 53 per cent to 39 per cent, a move called irresponsible by SPD financial experts who favour a 4 per cent cut across the board. Neither proposal will be adopted in time to ease Germany's way into European economic and monetary union, which begins this spring with the selection of those countries qualified to join, based on budget deficits.

While the Government appears

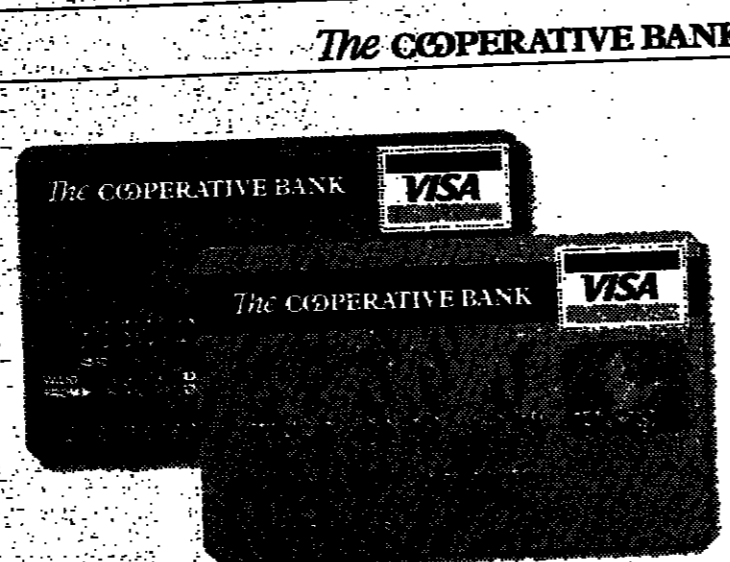
indifferent to the billions of pounds of taxpayers' money poured into bottomless welfare pots, it has decided to crack down on tax evaders by paying for information.

Tax evasion is costing the state hundreds of billions of pounds a year in lost income. However, at a meeting attended by ministers from all 16 German states, it was agreed that payments should not be given to known criminals, and should be made only when large sums of money are involved or a crime has been committed.



Theo Waigel right and Wolfgang Schäuble have failed to win Opposition agreement on tax reform

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Share plunge fuels gloom in Hong Kong

HONG KONG share prices, hit by a collapse of tourism and fears of avian flu, continued plunging for another day yesterday, bringing the total fall this year to 14 per cent. Groups of worried Hong Kong citizens gazed at stock market and currency monitor screens outside banks yesterday, gossiping anxiously as, at one point, the stock market fell below 9,000. It rallied later to end at 9,254, down almost 3 per cent.

It was the big operators that were fuelling the downturn, analysts said, by selling Hong Kong dollars. American dollars are being bought by companies that, while they need US money to clear future debts, fear that the link between the two currencies established in 1983 would be broken. At the same time, the market is awash with unanswered questions: Why are

Analysts believe China is now at risk from the turmoil, writes James Pringle

foreign exchange reserves growing when they should be declining? Is China pumping money into the territory, and what happens if it stops? Why is there heavy selling of shares in mainland companies? The answer, many believe, is that China is now being drawn into the general crisis. Some analysts think that the second phase of the Asian economic crisis is now unfolding, with markets in Singapore and Taiwan, which

largely survived the first round, also hit. The third phase is the possible crunch in China, with its tens of millions of unemployed or underemployed. Turmoil on the mainland would have incalculable ramifications throughout the region. Many Hong Kong people fear for their jobs in a round of blood-letting before the Chinese new year, January 29 ushers in the Year of the Tiger, which should mean prosperity, but its advent is now a mockery for the former tiger economies. **□ No entry:** Hong Kong has scrapped its port-of-first-asylum policy, used by thousands of Vietnamese boatpeople. The decision will end special treatment in the territory for Vietnamese refugees. (Reuters)

Economic storms, page 25



A trader at the Hong Kong stock exchange shows his frustration yesterday as the territory's shares fell. Citizens watched prices tumble on screens outside banks.

Panic buying adds to crisis in Indonesia

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN JAKARTA

INDONESIA reeled yesterday with financial markets plummeting for a fifth consecutive day and questions about President Suharto's political future, but the powerful military urged people to remain calm. The stock market and the currency plunged more than 18 per cent at one point, with the rupiah quoted at 10,000 to the dollar in late trading last week. It was quoted at under 5,000 — amid rumours that Mr Suharto might not seek a seventh term of office in the March presidential election. A government leader, who asked not to be identified, would only note that the President had not announced a decision yet. The chaos spread from the financial markets into the streets, with witnesses reporting panic buying of food and other essentials as people feared another round of price increases. Rumours abounded during the day, with whispers that the country might impose a moratorium on servicing its foreign debt gathering strength by the evening. There was no official indication that there was any basis to the talk. The freefall in the markets was also fuelled by unfounded rumours that Mr Suharto was stepping down and fears that the International Monetary Fund was unhappy with how Indonesia was proceeding with promised reforms in return for a \$40 billion (£2 billion) bailout package. One market analyst said: "There is no end to the economic crisis in sight as there is no confidence in the Indonesian Government... this means the political situation will get more and more volatile in the run-up to the March election." There were press reports that the National Brotherhood Foundation, a loyalist nationalist group, had called on Mr Suharto not to seek re-election. It said in a statement that Mr Suharto, who is 76 and in poor health, "has dedicated his life to the country for 50 years as a soldier

and a statesman", but that for the nation's sake he should make way for fresh blood. Social unrest is already brewing as millions of people have been laid off in the past three months. On Monday thousands of people went on the rampage in the West Java city of Bandung, smashing up hundreds of cars and shops. Supermarkets and traditional markets in several big cities were flooded yesterday with people who fear massive price rises in the wake of the rupiah's continuing collapse. "I don't know what to think anymore. The situation is just crazy," said Dianawati, a housewife buying two dozen bottles of cooking oil in a supermarket. "From what I read in the papers it seems the only way the country will ever recover is for President Suharto to go." In the past two

6 Social unrest is already brewing as millions of people have been laid off in the past three months

weeks, the media have become increasingly confident about printing people's demands for political reform. "We ourselves are surprised that no one is clamping down on us," one newspaper executive said. "But until they do, we will print what is really happening here." Despite the mounting tension, Mr Suharto's position is still extremely strong as he has the backing of both the armed forces and the ruling Golkar party. Should he choose to stand in March, he would be likely to romp home. "However, if the economic and social political situations deteriorate further, then even people in the army and the bureaucracy might consider calling for change," a diplomat said. "If that should happen, it would be a very different story."



Suharto: under growing pressure to step down



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Firm accused of plot to boost nicotine levels

THE Justice Department has issued the first criminal charge in its three-year investigation of the tobacco industry, in a move which could encourage Congress to insert harsher penalties against cigarette companies into the huge settlement drafted last year.

Government lawyers allege that a leading tobacco company conspired with a biotechnology firm to develop a strain of tobacco with unusually high levels of nicotine in secret foreign farms. The industry has denied for years that it has tried to boost levels of nicotine in cigarettes to keep smokers addicted, one of the most controversial allegations against the companies.

The Justice Department has not named or charged the "co-conspirator" tobacco company. Government officials say that it is Brown & Williamson Tobacco, the third largest American tobacco company, and a subsidiary of the British BAT Industries.

The biotechnology company, California-based DNA Plant Technology, has agreed to plead guilty to the charge of developing tobacco with double the normal levels of nicotine in Brazil and other countries, and to co-operate with the Justice Department's wide-ranging investigation.

Congress seeks strict control on tobacco farms, Bronwen Maddox writes

Commercial growing of high-nicotine tobacco is banned in the United States.

Last year 18 Brazilian farmers admitted they were growing the leaf.

The charge against DNAP is the relatively minor misdemeanour of sending seeds abroad without a licence, breaking a law which has since been repealed. The company is expected to pay a fine of \$200,000 (£123,000), twice the gain it made from the work.

Government officials are reported as saying: "This is the first step, and no one envisions it as the last." The move "ought to send a signal to the industry that the criminal inquiry is serious and that it is moving".

Boosting the nicotine levels in cigarettes is not illegal in itself. But the allegations, denied by the industry, are

central to many of the lawsuits brought against cigarette companies, including the actions by state attorneys-general, which form the basis of last year's settlement.

Members of Congress, who must decide whether to incorporate the settlement with new legislation, suggested yesterday that the prospect of a stream of criminal charges issued from the Justice Department could strengthen the hand of those who feel the deal was too generous to Big Tobacco.

Under the deal, a group of America's largest tobacco companies agreed to pay \$368.5 billion over 25 years in return for immunity against actions brought by state health authorities to reclaim the cost of treating diseases which appeared to stem from smoking. While Congress mulls over whether to implement the landmark settlement, some states are pursuing unilateral actions against the industry.

The threat of criminal charges may increase the pressure on tobacco companies to settle the state actions. Martin Mehan, a Democratic Congressman, argues that, if more charges follow, the industry may be pressed to make even greater concessions.



Zeeshan, left, and Arshad, two of the 13 children returning home to Pakistan after a year in a Saudi jail

Saudis release child prisoners

FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN KARACHI

A NIGHTMARE ended yesterday for 13 Pakistani children who returned home from Saudi Arabia after a year, where they had been in prison with their parents on drug-smuggling charges.

Tired and hungry, the children stumbled off a Pakistan International Airline flight that had been delayed for more than 24 hours in Saudi Arabia. The

children were granted amnesty after government talks between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, but their parents face the death penalty if convicted.

The freedom from a harsh Saudi jail might have brought an end to the ordeal of the rest of the children, but not to Shahnaz Ahmed, five. While her mother faces trial in Saudi Arabia, her father, grandmothers and several other close relatives are in Pakistani jails on drug charges and there was no one to meet her

at the airport. Shahnaz was temporarily lodged in an orphanage until arrangements are made to move her to live with her grandmother in jail.

Seven of the children, who are aged between three and 15, will stay with their relatives in Lahore while five others were sent to their villages in other parts of Punjab and Northwest Frontier Province. They and their parents were accused of carrying heroin packed in rubber bags in their stomachs.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Sect mass suicide 'stopped'

Santa Cruz, Tenerife: Police in the Canary Islands arrested a German psychologist hours before she allegedly planned to lead 30 followers of her religious cult in a mass suicide, officials said. Police said cult members believed that the end of the world was coming and that a spaceship would pick up their bodies. (AP)

Theft deaths

Mafeking: Two South African teenage boys died of apparent suffocation after being accused of theft and locked in a freezer. A relative and a woman were charged with murder. (AP)

Bugs go-ahead

Frankfurt: The German police, returning to crime-fighting methods that were last used under the Nazis, will soon be allowed to bug homes of suspected criminals, the Government said.

Botha marathon

Johannesburg: Hearings in the case against P. W. Botha, the former South African President accused of defying the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, could last two years, lawyers predicted.

Family shackles

Bangkok: Police said they had rescued a woman chained to a pole for 13 years by her parents. According to police, the parents believed their daughter, 43, had been driven insane by black magic. (AP)

Fearful Kaunda

Lusaka: Kenneth Kaunda, 73, the former Zambian President under house arrest here, told a court that he feared for his safety after a number of apparent attempts on his life. (Reuters)

Steady progress

Ankara: Parents' evenings at Satirilar village school in Turkey are fairly simple. Thirty-five of the 70 pupils have the same father, clan chief Ziya Yasar. He has 51 children by three wives. (Reuters)

Experts dismiss call for UN standby force

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT



Carrington: demand for well-planned operations

THE United Nations was urged yesterday to develop a tougher enforcement regime to ensure that all Security Council resolutions are implemented and respected.

The challenge facing the UN into the 21st century, said a report by a group of foreign policy experts headed by Lord Carrington, the former Foreign Secretary, was not to intervene in more conflicts but to make sure that, when it did take economic or military action, it was prepared to mount a well-planned operation.

However, Lord Carrington dismissed the proposal yesterday by Lord Owen, the former Labour Foreign Secretary, in another report on conflict prevention, that the UN should have its own rapid deployment force on permanent standby. Lord Carrington said it was impractical and involved inherent risks.

After publication yesterday of a report by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Lord Owen said it was essential that the UN should have a standby

force. A similar proposal was made some years ago by Boutros Boutros Ghali, the former UN Secretary-General, but received no support from key Security Council members.

Lord Carrington, head of an international task force on the enforcement of Security Council resolutions which produced recommendations in a report yesterday, said there would not be sufficient backing for a standby force.

He and his task force members said that any permanent

UN rapid deployment force would have to be relatively small and could not possibly be equipped for every type of conflict.

In its report, *Words to Deeds: Strengthening the UN's Enforcement Capabilities*, Lord Carrington's task force said the UN Secretary-General needed better-informed analysts to prepare for intervention operations. "It's the enforcement machinery that needs to be improved and also far better intelligence is required," he said.

Dog lovers baying for neutered Buddy

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE emergence of Buddy as America's latest icon gathered pace yesterday as animal rights experts urged President Clinton to set an example by neutering his dog.

They are pressing the White House to emasculate the five-month-old puppy next month on Spay Day USA, a national event sponsored by the Doris Day Animal League.

Jacque Schultz, a director at the American Society for the

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, said sterilisation improved a pet's health and helped to control the vast population of unwanted animals. "The President has a home that is a national treasure and as the dog matures he is more apt to lift his leg and mark all the things the taxpayers have paid for if he is not neutered."

Mike McCurry, the White House press secretary, backed away from his earlier insistence that there was no chance of Buddy being neutered.

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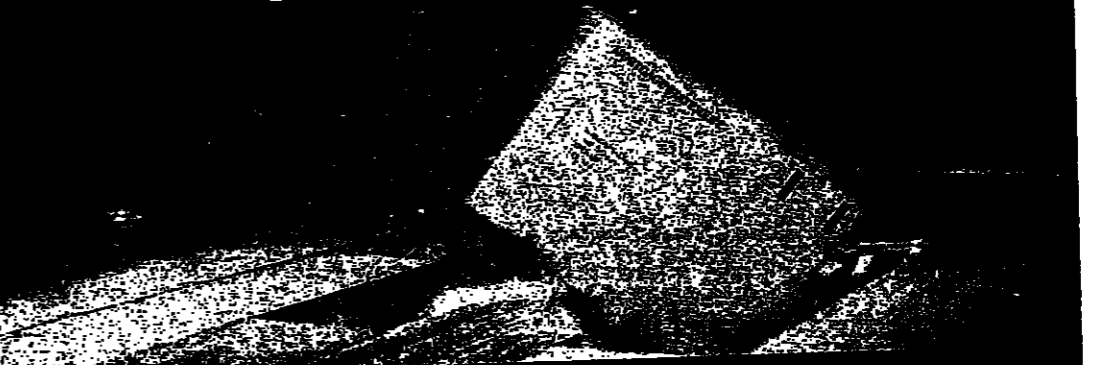
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Clinton leads calls to ban human cloning

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

THE White House yesterday called for a ban on human cloning after claims by the maverick scientist, Richard Seed, that he will begin to clone human beings using techniques akin to those employed in the creation of Dolly the sheep.

Dr Seed, 74, a Chicago physician whose curriculum vitae brims with experiments in embryology, has also announced that he has four infertile couples lined up to be his first subjects.

Mike McCurry, the White House spokesman, said: "The scientific community ought to make it clear to Dr Seed — and I think the President will make it clear to Dr Seed — that he has now elected to become irresponsible, unethical and unprofessional, should he proceed on his course."

"The President thinks it is important to move ahead with legislation that would make it very clear that this type of technology should be illegal," Dick Army, the House Majority Leader, also joined the chorus of criticism, calling for a ban on human cloning.

Mr Army said: "I for one do not want to live in a brave new world of sidewalk cloning clinics."

A national bio-ethics commission recommended last year, in the wake of the Dolly case, that Congress should legislate to ban human cloning. President Clinton has already prohibited the use of federal funds for such research and now wants private funding halted, too.

Dr Seed's reaction to the presidential censure was irreverent. Last night he said: "I don't happen to agree with the President of the United States. As far as I'm concerned, he's slick, sleazy Willie."

He continued: "My grand scheme is to create a clinic, a free-standing infertility clinic in Chicago, that produces approximately 500 human clones a year." In an eccentric vein, he added: "The first person to produce a healthy human clone will be the winner of the Super Bowl. The second person will be the loser."

Criticism of Dr Seed continued to pour in from scientists and ethics experts of all stripes. Arthur Caplan, a professor of ethics at the University of Pennsylvania, said: "Richard Seed is a person out on the fringe, seizing an issue and taking it up for his own purposes."

"One thing Dr Seed may have done is persuaded people inadvertently that, if the devil and the oddball are going to get anywhere near human cloning, we need a temporary ban to make sure it is minimally safe before we try it on humans."



A young Kurdish asylum-seeker at the San Foca charity centre near Otranto, southern Italy, where he and other refugees have been held for a week

Italy blamed over Kurdish refugee crisis

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

TURKEY and Italy yesterday agreed to work closely to solve the Kurdish refugee crisis, with Ankara assuring the Italian authorities it would "treat with respect" any Kurdish immigrants seeking asylum in Italy who were sent back within 48 hours.

However, at a meeting in Rome of European police chiefs, Turkish officials said Italy's "open arms" policy toward immigrants was fueling the crisis. Necati Bilcan, the Turkish chief of police, said the Kurds were not victims of persecution, as Italy believes, but economic migrants paying mafia smugglers to take them to Europe in search of a better life.

Giorgio Napolitano, the Italian Interior Minister, who chaired the meeting, said 2,646 Kurds from Turkey and Iraq had arrived in Italy since last July, many in small boats "which are difficult to stop". He said that more were on their way, and Italy would seek to intercept them. The "profitable criminal trade in human beings" had to be halted, he said, but Italy was not a "weak point" in Europe's borders, and there was "no need to be alarmed".

Signor Napolitano said that under the Dublin Convention of 1990 it was up to the nation receiving refugees to decide their status, and Italy took this obligation very seriously, processing each person "on a case-by-case basis". He said Italy wanted a "Europe-wide solution" to the Kurdish crisis, and noted that Germany had given refugee status to 30,000 Turkish citizens, most of them Kurds — "far more than Italy".

Turkey has been fighting Kurdish separatists for 13 years, and is at odds with the European Union over human rights abuses. Italy is sympathetic to Turkey's EU membership application but regards the hundreds of Kurdish refugees who arrive on its shores as members of an oppressed minority.

The latest crisis arose ten days ago when 1,200 Kurds arrived at southern Italian ports, raising the spectre of a flood of refugees entering Europe via Italy. The prospect raised questions about the Schengen agreement on open borders, which Italy signed last October. Illegal immigrants are allowed to stay in Italy for two weeks while requests for asylum are considered, but a new law on immigration currently passing through the Italian parliament would provide for instant expulsion.

Mr Bilcan emphasised that the long-term solution lay in closer collaboration between Italian and Turkish police at ports and borders to "stop this trade in human beings". Officials said Ankara would make available to Italy detailed information on the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), the separatist organisation that Ankara is fighting in southeast Turkey.

Profitable criminal trade in human beings has to be halted

Khatami calls links with Arm at grassroots

Blair vows tougher curbs on migrants

BY JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR yesterday backed moves for tougher European immigration controls following concern over the influx of Kurdish refugees from Turkey and Iraq into Italy.

Launching the British presidency of the European Union in London, the Prime Minister made clear that Britain would take an active part in strengthening EU border controls, which have already led to a row between Germany and Italy.

The issue was given top priority at yesterday's meeting with EU commissioners. Germany has complained that Italy's open-door policy has allowed tens of thousands of Kurdish refugees into the EU and across its own borders.

Italy has signed the Schengen agreement on the abolition of border controls within Europe, thus allowing illegal immigrants to move freely into other countries once they reach Italy. Britain has opted out of Schengen.

The abolition of internal controls is now in serious question unless member states with frontiers in Central Europe strengthen their customs and passport checks. Yesterday Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, held talks with five European commissioners in an attempt to draw up a draft programme to be discussed in Brussels this month.

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Yousef branded "apostle of evil"

Life for US bomb plotter

Washington: Ramzi Yousef, convicted of masterminding the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre and plotting to destroy a dozen American passenger jets, was described as an "apostle of evil" by a judge yesterday (Tom Rhodes writes). He sentenced Yousef, 29, to life in prison. The judge, in what amounted to effective solitary confinement for life, said he should be quarantined from the rest of the world, visited only by his family.

CIA says Saddam won showdown

THE CIA has concluded that President Saddam Hussein won the latest standoff over United Nations weapons inspections and that Syria is seeking to forge an anti-American alliance with Iraq, according to reports in Washington yesterday.

The intelligence agency added that the Iraqi leader would continue to "flout" UN demands if Washington failed to exert a harsher response to his actions.

In a separate report sent to American policymakers this week, the CIA said that Syria, a traditional enemy of Baghdad, had made overtures to Iraq for an alliance that would include the deployment of Syrian troops should a ground war erupt again in the Gulf.

The agency apparently has not liked either the UN or President Clinton's dovish approach in gaining access by weapons inspectors to Saddam's presidential palace. In a report leaked to *The Washington Times* yesterday, the CIA said that Saddam had been frustrated only with the

Intelligence chiefs are now alerting Washington to Syrian moves for an Iraqi alliance, Tom Rhodes reports

pace of sanctions relief itself. "Saddam has benefited from the UN Security Council's reluctance to approve the use of military force or to impose significant new sanctions when Baghdad obstructs the UN Special Commission mission," said the report.

The report went on to cite the Russian-led effort in the Security Council as a diplomatic coup for Saddam and one that had resulted in Moscow drafting several pro-Iraq resolutions to introduce at the UN in coming weeks. One, it is said, would declare Iraq to

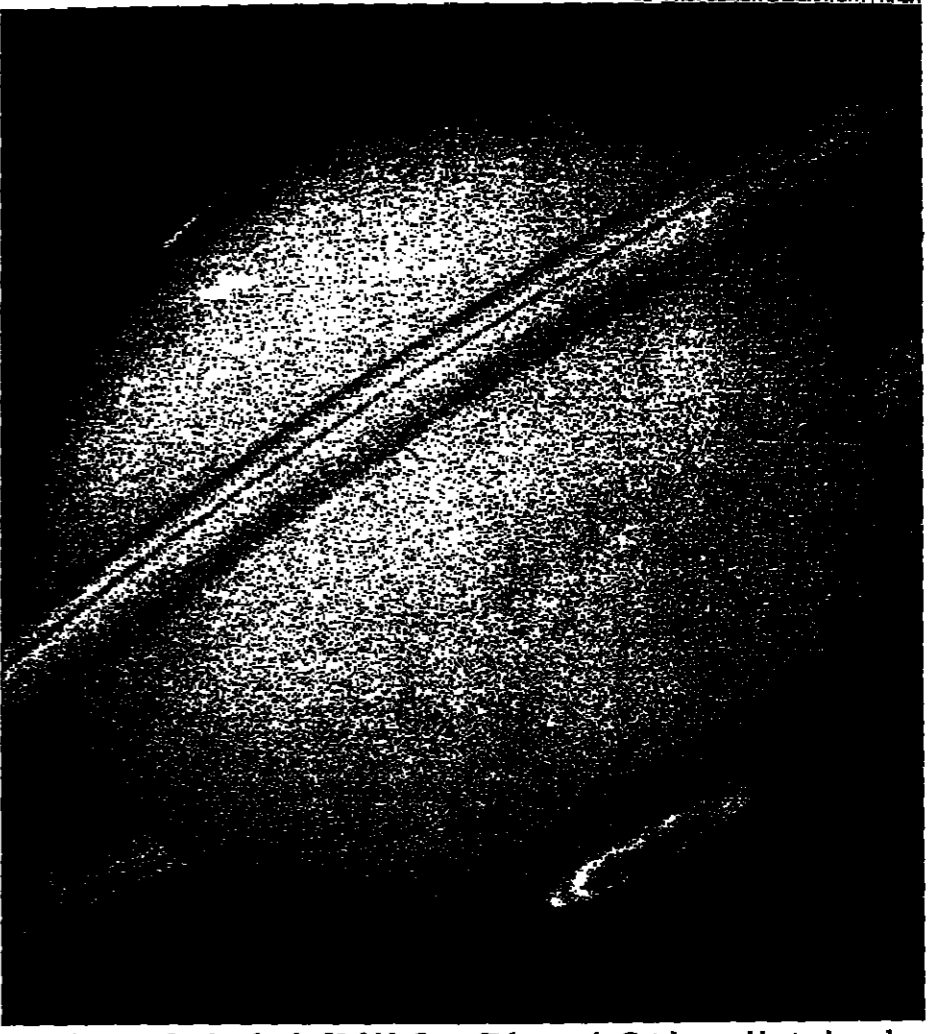
be in compliance with UN resolutions concerning the elimination of nuclear-weapons related goods. But the agency noted that Russian efforts to back Baghdad had been "complicated" by the blocking of UN access to the palaces. American officials have said that the US will veto all pro-Iraq resolutions tabled by the Russians in New York.

The special analysis of Iraq concluded that Saddam's regime "appears stable" despite seven years of economic sanctions, but that divisions within his family presented the greatest potential for sparking a security threat. Last year's assassination attempt against Uday, one of Saddam's sons, had provoked no serious threat to the regime and, despite occasional attacks from Shia insurgents to the

south and Kurdish separatists to the north, Iraq's security forces remained effective.

The second report appeared to signal that Syria, long a key Middle East player and ally of Iran, has switched sides. A visit in November to Damascus by Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, "was the result of extensive Syrian efforts to initiate a rapprochement", the report said. The Syrians had proposed the unifying of their ruling Baath political parties, and joint action to remove Turkish forces from northern Iraq.

Jerusalem: Israel defied US peace efforts yesterday by giving the go-ahead for more than 600 extra homes for Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank and pledging to restart building work soon at Har Homa, a settlement for 32,000 Jews.



A photograph taken by the Hubble Space Telescope in October and just released showing the first image of Saturn's ultraviolet aurora. The ringed planet is 810 million miles from Earth, and the phenomenon can only be seen from space

Khatami calls for links with America at grassroots only

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON AND MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

CLINTON Administration officials yesterday said they were disappointed that President Khatami of Iran did not call for political contact with the American Government during an interview in which he urged closer cultural links between the two countries.

"We welcome the fact that he wants a dialogue with the American people," the State Department said. "But we continue to believe that the way to address the issues between us is for the two Governments to talk directly."

That omission was probably due to a compromise between Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's hardline religious leader, and the reformist-minded Mr Khatami, who is determined to steer Iran out of its isolation. He has already improved relations with key pro-American Gulf Arab states.

"Khamenei could have prevented the CNN interview taking place, but he has approved this sort of unofficial dialogue," said an Iranian diplomat in one European capital. Publicly, Ayatollah Khamenei has sharply rejected suggestions of a possible rapprochement with the US.

At the risk of disappointing Washington, Mr Khatami

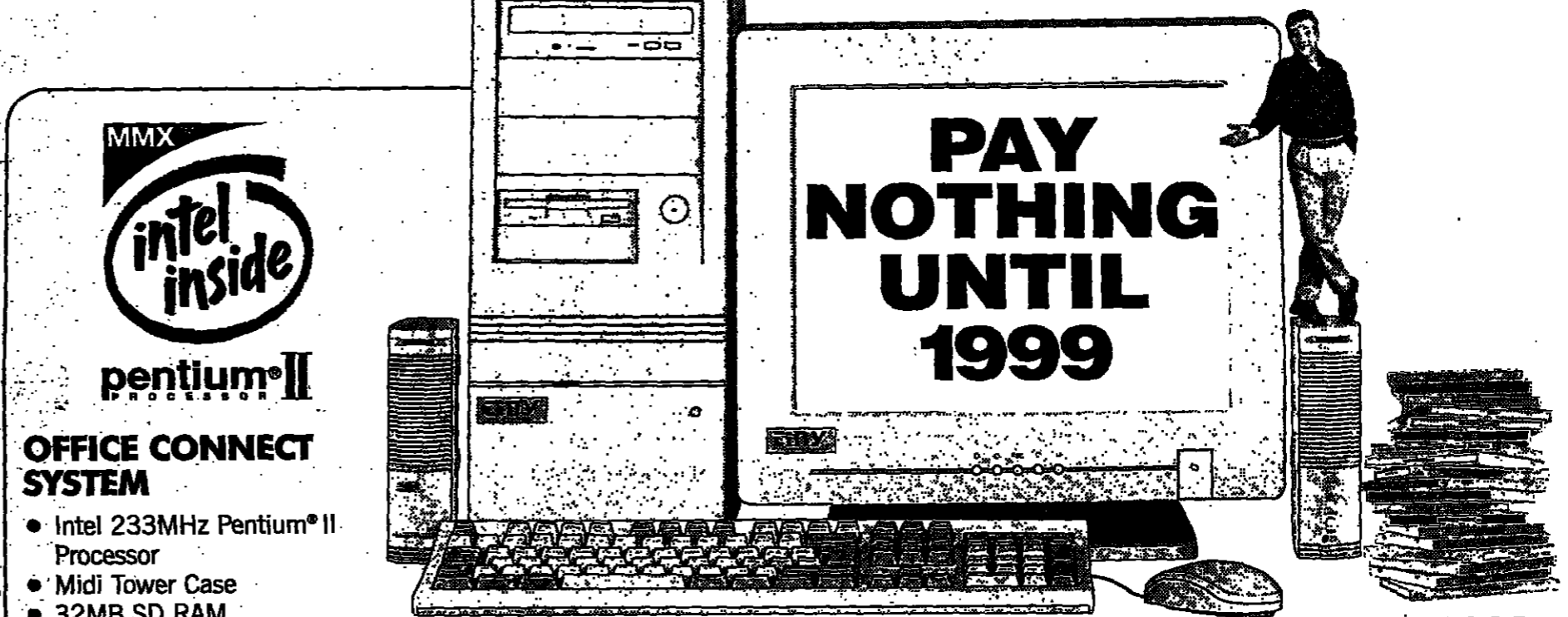
was anxious to move slowly rather than do anything that would encourage his hardline opponents to hamper his efforts, diplomats said. "His position is a consensus position of the Iranian Government as a whole," said a senior Western envoy in Tehran.

Madeline Albright, the US Secretary of State, has also called for direct government-to-government talks — which would mark the first diplomatic contact since Islamic clerics overthrew the previous Iranian Government in 1979.

The Administration's latest comments came after a startling television broadcast on Wednesday night when Mr Khatami, interviewed in Tehran by CNN, shattered 18 years of continuous hostility by offering an olive branch — to the American people. A recording of the interview was shown to Iranians yesterday.

Mr Khatami called for widespread unofficial contacts through tourism, journalism, and exchanges of academics to break down the "bulky wall of mistrust". He told Americans that their leaders should apologise to them for a foreign policy that had fostered distrust of the US across the developing world.

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■ Mozaïs compact by Guerlain. This gleaming gold compact looks expensive and feels elegant. It contains mirror and brushes and can be filled with your choice of Mozaïs eye shadows and powder blushers. Compact case £24; eye shadows (nine shades) £9.50 each, blushers (eight shades) £12.50 each. Available from major department stores and selected leading chemists.

Sit on your wallet...

There used to be a jolly picture, published annually around this time of year, of a brace of posh ladies braining each other with an item of Spode in the China sale at a Top People's Store. But recently this picture, and the covetous energy that it represented, seems to have been replaced with something rather more restrained. The headlines, it is true, spoke of a sales jamboree: Oxford Street stores, it was said, were even considering imposing a spending limit on customers.

Then why, I wondered, when I embarked rather nervously on a little race to the West End, were all the fashion departments so quiet? Perhaps everyone else was mixing it down in White Goods. Then again, perhaps people have been so depressed by the Guidelines on how not to pick up a Fashion Disaster at the sales which have been appearing in the papers that they have lost the will to shop.

Some of the recent advice from fashion pundits on how to be a successful sales shopper might have struck Oliver Cromwell and his Levellers as a shade on the dour side. Don't buy high fashion — it will date; don't spend more than you can afford; don't buy anything in the hope that you may slip into it; don't be seduced by designer labels. Slick, in short, to classic



neutrals of unobtrusive cut. A pox on all of that, I say. Of course, one doesn't want to end up like the poor lady I saw being escorted, glittering-eyed and babbling, from the fashion floor at Liberty by her husband. "It is time to go home now," he was saying, quite kindly, but with his hand firmly in the small of her back. Nor does one want to join the sheeplike throng that I saw outside Gucci on my way to the hairdresser's. "That is soooo sad," said Andre, the hairdresser, when I told him about it. "And," he added, with a dismissive roll of the eyes, "what will they buy when they get inside? Last season's modes, that's what."

Well, there is no getting away from last season's modes if you go to the sales. But buy intelligently, and you will illuminate your look for many seasons to come. In any case, the point, and the joy, of sales shopping (it ought to be an exciting quest, not a penitential pilgrimage) is to bag something truly stupendous — the sort of thing that makes

your colleagues drop their biscuits into their coffee and go "Where did you get that?" Useful and desirable though classics may be, they are not the stuff of bargains. They sell steadily, so there is no incentive to slash the price. Besides, where is the thrill in snapping up yet another pair of black trousers? Sales are for chancing upon the luxurious little thing that you could never afford in the ordinary way but that lifts your look on to a higher stylistic plane.

A good rule, when hunting, is to be guided by love. If you buy a garment because you can't live without it, then you will mind a great deal less if, in the next month's *Vogue*, you find it on a list of things to throw out this second. Love is also a valuable insurance policy against the disapproval of your husband/best friend/child. "Horrible," said my friend Henry, when I showed him the ravishing pair of gold reptile-print velvet trousers I'd just bought at Caroline Charles, *prêt à porter*.

"Don't be silly," I said, "you just haven't quite got the point of them yet..."

So, how to tell the desirable from the disastrous? Get your eye in, is the first rule. Make a mental note at the beginning of the season of what you would like, if only you could afford it. A couple of months later, you probably will be able to afford it.

Think about quality, and aim high. What is the point of buying cut-price angora when you can probably find cashmere for the same money? For this reason, I don't bother much with the high street, where bargains can be had all year round. The only exception is where a chain has had an outstanding season — Warehouse's sculpted silver satin party dress, red velvet cocktail bag, Tocca-esque embroidered grey chiffon and long hooded wool robe are dazzling designs at minute prices; Laura Ashley, despite talk of a loss of design direction, has silk velvet in wonderful, rich colours — tawny orange and Nattier blue, much reduced.

The last great rule is, sit on your wallet. Some of the very best sales — Amanda Wakeley, Catherine Walker, Mazono Blahnik, have only just begun. If you went out on December 27, and blew your dress allowance for the next six months, you may be very, very sorry.

Go with the glow

Shine on: add a subtle and healthy glow to dull winter complexions

Photographer: RYAN SULLIVAN
Stylist: Deborah Brett
Hair: Cln Mestony for Shipton
Lighting: Lowe
Make-Up: Johan Fuchs at Michaeljohn Management
Model: Avignon

COMPILED BY DEBORAH BRETT

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AFTER years of being told to avoid shine, especially on the nose, the glowing look is back. You won't look like an oil slick; these six products will simply add a subtle, healthy glow to dull winter complexions.

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£26, at Liberty, Regent Street W1

PRESCRIPTIVES LIP SHINE
Feels jammy on the lips but lasts well. Good on its own or over lipstick 10/10
£8.50, available in major department stores

BENEFIT'S LIGHTENING MOISTURISER
It may not look much but it produces a golden shimmer. Worth every penny 9/10
£15, at House of Fraser

TRUCCO EYE CREAM IN PURELY PLATINUM
This eye shadow has a creamy texture and applies smoothly 8/10
£13.45, available through hairdressing and beauty salons

STILA ALL OVER SHIMMER
This blended veil of darker skin tones. It looked great on cheekbones and as an eye shadow 7/10
£26 at Space NK, 45 Brook Street W1

FACE STOCKHOLM GOLD POWDER
Feels less dry than some powders, easy to apply and the effect is almost imperceptible. The skin shines when it catches the light — a bonus for a candlelit dinner 8/10
£15 at Liberty

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Why Mary Queen of Scots is this year's hottest fashion inspiration. Style, on Sunday

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Do you get the drift?

ANYONE who has been foolish enough to emulate Tara Palmer-Tomkinson knows that wearing a catsuit on the slopes is a recipe for pneumonia. This winter the American pistes provide a warmer but stylistically cooler inspiration with loose zippered ski-pants and sleek padded jackets. One of the big names over there, O'Neill, has now opened a store in Neal Street, Covent Garden, selling the Boardcore and Boardbabe labels, for men and women respectively, as well as the surf lines. Bestsellers include the "drift pants" — straight-legged trousers with zips at the ankles, and, in some styles, zips at the knee where padding can be inserted. The knees are also covered in a specially toughened fabric. Inquiries: 0191-419 1777

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'I would love to have had children with Helen'



It took film director Taylor Hackford 14 years to lure Helen Mirren down the aisle. Interview by Moira Petty

For one so implacably opposed to marriage, the actress Helen Mirren broke her vow to remain "sensibly" single with a remarkably romantic ceremony on New Year's Eve.

In a gold Cossack-style outfit, Miss Mirren, 51, married her long-term partner, the Hollywood film director Taylor Hackford, in a candlelit Scottish Highland church, followed by a reception at Castle Stuart.

Given the publicity that attends Miss Mirren's every move, it is perhaps not surprising that Mr Hackford failed to mention his wedding plans when he gave an interview just before Christmas.

He referred to Miss Mirren, with whom he has had a 14-year relationship, as "my wife" and said: "I've told her that any time she wants to get married, the offer is there on the table."

Asked if he thought he would be able to persuade her to formalise the union, he said, teasingly: "Maybe not... or maybe. In any case, she's the person for me for life."

Although he wore a kilt for the wedding, which coincided with his 53rd birthday, he was dressed in a dapper grey suit and highly polished shoes when we met in London. But the white beard signals the nonconformity of a man who later declared that he makes "working-class films" within the Hollywood system.

He is a lofty figure but maintains a calm presence. While he has fathered two sons from his previous mar-

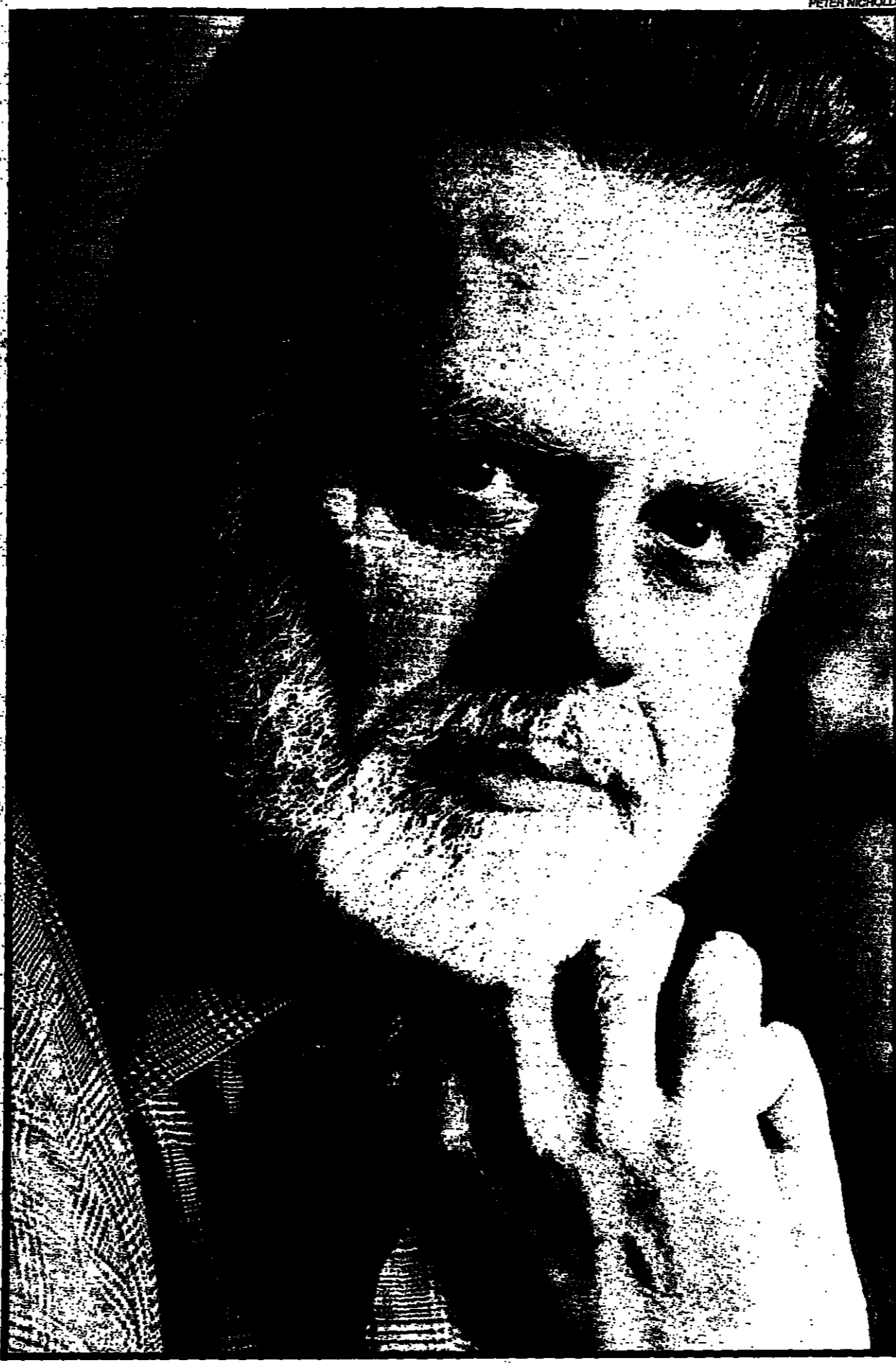
riages, his bright blue eyes cloud over when I ask if he would have liked to have had children with Miss Mirren.

"She would have made the best mother, a truly great one," he says sadly. "I would have loved to have seen her as a mother. We would have had children if she had wanted to. The decision had to be hers. But we have a very interesting life and my children have had the experience of knowing and loving her."

They met in 1984 when Miss Mirren auditioned for a role in his film, *White Nights*. Mr Hackford returned 25 minutes late from lunch with the ballet dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov, who was also in the film. "I apologised but there was a cold disdain from her. I tried to make small talk and she said, 'Are we going to read?' She was smoking, man! Then she asked if there was anything else, and boom, she was out of there."

Mr Hackford's favourite description for Miss Mirren, apart from "wife", is "the greatest actress in the world". He says: "What turns me on most is talent. I was definitely smitten by her. She's fabulous to work with, very smart and intuitive. You can feel the pain and ambition of characters like Jane Tennison of *Prime Suspect* through her eyes. I can read her in our private life as well. There can be complications when you get to read somebody that well."

"What is special about her is that she is not a narcissistic actress. She has a professional ego but is totally real. In terms



Hackford says his wife is the world's best actress: "What turns me on most is talent. I was most definitely smitten by her"

of the woman behind the actress, there's no question that she's a very exciting person and has a sensuality that is palpable. It's easy to talk about someone from the exterior but you reach other depths when you have been together this long."

Miss Mirren has often spoken frankly about her love life. Mr Hackford, smiling boyishly, says: "I love her candour. I have the most love and trust for her. If she spoke in a wildly destructive way, I wouldn't hesitate to speak up. She is always very true to herself."

Nor is he abashed by her many nude film roles. "I don't find it difficult that she is in sexy scenes. They're not the easiest things to do but it's crucial to get performances that are real on the screen. I ask actors to step up to these kind of situations, so it would be unrealistic not to expect others to ask this of Helen."

They have not worked together since *White Nights* in the mid-Eighties. Mr Hackford is scathing of what he calls "the sexist tyranny" of Hollywood. "For women in Hollywood, their star rises at 18 and sets at 35, while for men it is from their mid-thirties to late fifties."

"Helen's a woman of a certain age and they're not going to build films around her. She has sense of her own worth and she is responsible for her own fate in Hollywood."

"If, when she was in her early twenties, she had wanted to go and be a sexy bombshell, she could have done so but she chose to go off and work in the theatre with director Peter Brook."

Mr Hackford made his name with the low-budget hit *Officer and a Gentleman*, starring Richard Gere, in the early Eighties. Subsequent films have included *La Bamba*, *Against all Odds*, *When I Fall in Love* and *Dolores Claiborne*.

His latest picture, *The Devil's Advocate*, starring Keanu Reeves and Al Pacino, is a Faustian tale of greed, temptation and sin within a secular society. While wrapped in an entertaining format, the film has a strong political agenda.

"I think money has very little conscience. We live in a system in which the rewards are clear. It is becoming more and more a world of the rich and the poor."

Raised in Santa Barbara by his mother who worked long hours to support him after his father left home, he has never forgotten the struggles of those early years. "My parents divorced when I was a few months old. I spent a couple of summers with my father but hardly saw him again."

"My mother had no financial support and it was very hard for her, but she was a very strong individual. I certainly would not paint her as a tragic figure, despite what happened. When I was eight, my brother, who was 15 years older, was electrocuted in an accident at work."

"Having gone through that, a year later she became ill with breast cancer. At that young age, I questioned whether my mother was going to live but she did. It was a traumatic experience for me but it was one that led to maturity."

The original script of *The Devil's Advocate* had "passed through the ranks of Hollywood stardom" before Mr Hackford spotted its potential, recruiting *Dolores Claiborne* writer Tony Gilroy to revamp it. The devil figure, a warped but successful lawyer played by Al Pacino, was conceived as "a Nietzschean devil" rather than the Devil of Christianity.

The film argues the importance of free will and taking responsibility for our lives.

"I see it as a cautionary tale for the millennium. This devil is inside you. He presents you with the thing you want most."

Evil can be funny and seductive. "I had a nightmare fight with Warner Bros. I told them that they had tried to produce the film their way, now they should try it my way. You have to be fairly crafty as a filmmaker. Hollywood is full of exploitation movies with a lot of sex and monsters and

no ideas." Al Pacino had turned down the original script five times before Mr Hackford's version reached him. "He's an artist and the best American actor," he declares.

"Too often film stars become famous because they have a certain talent and they are rewarded with high salaries, pampering and adulation. They won't risk changing. They are in a state of arrested development. At risks artistic suicide, unlike most of the actors of his generation."

"He's this little guy from the street, incredibly smart, a self-made man. He thinks this is one of his best performances but Hollywood won't recognise it in the same way."

Mr Hackford criticises the technical expertise of many film actors: "America has a lot of numblers." It was also hard to cast the Keanu Reeves role of a young lawyer lured by Pacino's devil figure.

"He had to be an articulate professional. In the Thirties, Forties and Fifties there would have been top-name actors for that kind of a role. Keanu looked me in the eye and said he would make the commitment and I put him through mental and physical exercises in preparation."

He set the film in the legal world as he feels America has become an excessively litigious place where justice is open to those who can pay. "It is emblematic of a sick system."

Mr Hackford was raised as a Protestant but says that he is now "a confirmed agnostic, cynical about organised religion". But, appositely for a man now embarking on married life with Helen Mirren, he concludes: "I have a basic optimism about the human spirit."

● *The Devil's Advocate* opens nationwide on Friday January 16

I just want to paint my toenails

Even superwomen need high heel days, says Rachel Morris

Don't tell anyone, but some of my friends are suffering from gender depression. Take Cleo, who has two children under ten and a fancy job in the Civil Service. She rang me the other day and after describing her hectic working schedule, she sighed and said: "Oh Lord, it's all very confusing for the children. They seem to have a man for a mother."

Or consider Moira, whose husband left her with three children, the youngest not yet a year old. These days Moira earns a living, brings up the children, changes all the lightbulbs and puts out the rubbish. Moira is doing fine - brilliantly, in fact - but she is still wondering anxiously if one day she will simply turn into a man.

It is not hard to see why we are depressed. In the Fifties - or so I am told - all women were expected to dwell at the "girly" end of that scale which runs from extreme femininity to extreme masculinity, whereas nowadays you can put yourself where you like. Or so the theory goes.

In practice, the need to earn money and pay bills and take responsibility means that most of us do not have time for the languid, toenail-painting kind of femininity which was around in our mothers' days. And while it is one thing to give up all that by choice, it is quite another to have it taken away by the demands of work. And when I say "work", I mean oodles of it - children, careers, the house - three jobs rolled into one. No wonder we are all suffering from burnout.

Hence my girlfriends and I have been indulging in nostalgia sessions - held in an atmosphere of secrecy and guilt - in which we speculate on what life must have been like when the greatest demand upon a woman was to keep her husband happy. We are keeping our sessions secret because we do not want the men to know that the smallest iota of doubt has entered our minds. And of course we are feeling guilty, because we know there is no ingratitude like that of the children of revolutionaries. To think of the struggles our mothers went through, and now all we want to do is paint our toenails.

We have tried all the usual methods of resolving

our internal gender conflicts - such as spending large amounts of money on expensive clothes and make-up - but we have always felt that something else was needed. And then at our last session, while watching *North by Northwest* starring Cary Grant (which may have been the problem - it is a terribly sexy film), we came up with the idea of traditional gender days. On these days - to be held perhaps once a month - we would give up all the power which comes from earning money. We would forgo all opinions and argumentative behaviour, and instead would iron the shirts, sort the socks and cook the meals. In return our men



would earn enough money to ensure that we could spend a large chunk of that day drifting from hairdresser to beauty salon to shopping mall in high heels.

I have not put the idea to the men yet, but I think they will jump at it. In fact, I suspect them of holding nostalgia sessions in the pub on Friday nights already. Because now that extreme femininity, like extreme masculinity, has gone out of fashion, they too are having to muddle along in the middle of the scale. (In our household it is only the children who can afford to luxuriate in outrageous femininity, painting their lips and toenails with abandon.)

Meanwhile I can see only one problem with our traditional gender days. This is that all the beauty salons in the world would not make us willing to relinquish our power for more than 24 hours, whereas the men might acquire a taste for this system and be unwilling to give it up when the day was over. In which case I might be ironing shirts and sorting socks for ever, and that is not such a smart idea.

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CHANEL BOUTIQUE

Trimble's way out of the Maze

John Lloyd says a revengers' tragedy can yet be avoided

A plan is being finalised which represents the Northern Irish Unionists' best shot at a settlement to Ulster's 30-year crisis. It will be unveiled soon, at least in principle. It, or something close to it, should be taken, locked in and implemented.

We have had, over the season of goodwill, a bloody glimpse of the revenge tragedy waiting to swallow up the Province once more. It has caused Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State, to enter the Maze today to talk to the chilling men who run the loyalist gangs within that unique penitentiary. Perhaps her charm, chutzpah and courage (none of which were in doubt) will persuade them to appear at the talks due to resume on Monday, which their leaders, for the most part, wish to attend. But her qualities, which have probably assisted the process to continue, will not be enough to bring it to a conclusion. For that, one of the famous hard choices has to be made — and soon.

David Trimble, the Official Unionists' leader, has spent much of the talks refining a settlement proposal which he is ready to present. He has done little — a mistake on his part — to make it acceptable to, or even clear to, the Social Democratic Labour Party, the main, and constitutional, nationalist grouping. But he has signalled its outlines in talks with the Prime Minister, with whom he remains on trusting terms (he does not enjoy with Dr Mowlam). He thinks he can sell it to the vast majority of Northern Irish Unionists.

Fein political wing, the devil is in the principle. Mr Trimble's principle is maintenance of the Union and integrity of the State. He knows that the Unionists want peace; he also knows that they want the Union, and has been reminding that a significant fringe will kill if they feel it is threatened. They could be brought to accept what he is about to propose, though it is, in his view, close to the limit.

Three men are critical to the success of his venture, but none is a natural ally of Mr Trimble. Tony Blair must see it as a settlement whose main points he can commend and defend. If it becomes subject to terrorism. The Prime Minister won Mr Trimble's trust when he gave a speech last May dismissing the possibility of a united Ireland for three or four generations; the Unionist leader believes Mr Blair may be prepared to put his authority behind it, and bring his Northern Ireland Secretary into line if she demurs.

Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, must also be convinced it is the best he is likely to see the Unionists accept, and be prepared to press it on the Northern nationalists. Mr Blair has refused to be "a persuader" of the Unionists for a united Ireland; Mr Ahern must be prepared to persuade the nationalists that they must live with a separate statehood for the foreseeable future and beyond. He is leader of the more nationalist of the two parties, Fianna Fail, but he is also non-ideological, the head of a booming economy, and pressed as much by his electors to have done with the Troubles as by nationalists who want the old sore kept open.

A flawed settlement is emerging based on a Union

There is, at last, John Hume. The SDLP leader has built his strategy in the 1990s on having Sinn Fein accepted as interlocutors by the British Government; although it has betrayed him by breaking ceasefires, and outflanked him by taking votes from his party, he has stuck with his view. But Sinn Fein and he had to face the Unionists' bottom line. If he can be convinced that this is it, he can also be convinced — in the name of a lasting peace — to speak for it?

These are very large questions — especially the last, to Mr Hume. But they must be put soon, if the situation is not to slide once more towards multiple murder. Huge concessions have been made and are still being made to terrorists to keep the politicians talking; they cannot be justified, except on the basis that the talking is expected to produce settlement. One is now emerging; it is based on the only possible grounds, the continuation of a Union to which all the democratic actors assent, even if they do not like it. It will be frail, contended, denounced. It needs the authority of the British Government to preserve it. A hard choice, but the only one.

The author is associate editor of the New Statesman.



It's good to be needed

We in the West no longer know just how helpless a child may be — nor the true nobility of devoted parenthood

To those who travel by bus and train in the Third World, something in the poignancy of the image I try to recapture below will be familiar. I was on a small bus going from Pisac to Cuzco in Peru. The road takes a high pass over the mountains, and at sundown — it was sundown — the air freezes quite suddenly.

Some passengers slept, others stared out of the window, huddling blankets around them. The man and woman in front of me, of mixed Indian and Spanish blood, tended their little girl.

She was perhaps nine, and a Down's syndrome child. Her face was slightly puffy. On one of her hands was a bad burn — perhaps she had fallen in the kitchen fire, or tried to pick up something hot. But she was much loved. This girl was very clean and neat, dressed all in ruffles and bows, though straight black hair had been tied with a green ribbon and her little shoes elaborately laced. From time to time her father patted her, as if reassuringly.

He and his wife were obviously very poor. Their clothes were respectable but shabby and their string basket held only a few basic provisions and a frayed blanket. She was the mother, perhaps forty, dozed off; her husband, awake, took charge of their daughter.

The girl seemed confused as to where she was and jerked her head from side to side, whimpering sometimes. When she did this the man, who looked younger than his wife, cradled the child, folding his arm securely around her and rocking her. This comforted and calmed her, by contrast with the unfamiliar interior of the bus, full of strange people, she knew and trusted him. He was thin and his face careworn. He looked tired.

But what touched my feelings was a sense of how completely alone in the world this man and his wife were. They were like a small boat on a wide and treacherous sea. They may have had family and friends, but there will have been absolutely nothing to fall back on materially and nobody, nobody else upon whom they could devolve care of their child — nobody even to share the load with. There will have been no state provision or special benefit, no local authority "carer" to help with their daughter, no institution except of the most pitiful kind in which they could place her — and certainly no homework clubs. That a child like theirs would otherwise have been doomed I saw in another town, Puno, where a pathetic, rat-like retarded boy was placed on display on the pavement with a sign beside him (I translate: "To the public: The Overseer of Minors places at your disposition a boy, certifying of the same, that he was abandoned by his family at the age of four, lived in different households and places, and was taken away by the authorities and brought to this town. Thus he has nothing, a "Whoever might wish to adopt him...") But nobody did. My travelling companions on that bus from Pisac were all that separated their little girl from such a fate, and they knew it.

It would be possible at this point in my essay to take the route you might anticipate. I could make a plea for the vulnerable and the weak in poor countries. I could describe the admirable work done by voluntary agencies established to help street children, orphans, the sick and the retarded in South America. Such work is commendable. But the focus of my interest on that bus was not the little girl at all — she was fine, if unheeding — but her parents. Her father struck me as having attained a nobility, a happiness, a state of grace which it would be hard to surpass. It was transcendental. It was almost ecstatic. But this is not a

homily on the virtuous poor. The couple's poverty was immaterial. Wealthier or poorer parents could have experienced the same rapture. To add to this: couple's monthly income would have contributed nothing to the joyfulness of the father's smile, nor diminished it either. His rapture had a simple cause. Somebody, some living creature, depended utterly upon him.

There is perhaps no pleasure to equal the knowledge that you are everything to somebody. To know that not just emotionally but in the very necessities of life itself, you hold some fellow-creature's wellbeing in your hands is the deepest sense exhilarating. You are their shelter and their floor; their door into the world and their wall against it. Without you they would perish. In no way is it necessary that they know or appreciate this. For your pleasure to be complete it is better they do not. To be trusted without question, taken for granted and hardly noticed, is sublime. I seem (I hope) a steady driver and enjoy driving by night. A car on the motorway in the dark is a small and vulnerable pool and driving is one of the diminishing number of dangerous things we are still allowed to do in modern Britain. There have been occasions when, glancing at the seat beside me and into the rear-view mirror, I have realised that all my passengers were asleep, and felt enormously moved. It is such an accolade to be leant on as we lean against a tree, without acknowledging the tree.

Social and welfare policy is usually seen in terms of its clients: the disabled, the weak, children and the elderly. These are more or less dependent and we are forever discussing their needs — palpable needs, quantifiable. But a need we seldom discuss is the need to be depended upon. This is speculative and intangible; impossible to quantify. I am coming to believe, however, that it is important for the normal

adult. We see its stirrings in the child. How noticeable is the child's wish to "help" — to be needed! How intensely absorbed is the small girl in the imagined needs of her dolls. How strong is the instinct of children to own pets. Denied real pets they crave computer pets instead, projecting upon inanimate circuitry a frustrated instinct to nurture something living.

I wonder whether the growth in pet-ownership in developed countries during this century can be explained partly by the expansion of the welfare state? These days, the only fellow-creature enjoying a relationship of total dependence upon an Englishman or Englishwoman is likely to be a small rodent, cat, goldfish, poodle or budgerigar. No wonder sad people feed pigeons in the park. A hundred years ago an individual's hunger to protect and sponsor would have been satisfied by the responsibilities husbands and wives bore towards each other, parents towards their children, and, in their own parents' old age, towards their elders.

Life was full of dependence. Is the young man you might meet in a British shopping precinct, out buying Christmas videos with his family, conscious of dependence upon him in that full sense of the term? When, once, I spent time in Newcastle with unemployed families, I found the suffering of the breadwinners profound: profound not because life as their families had known it ended when their job ended — but because it had not. Dependence upon Dad had been replaced by dependence on the State. Dad was truly redundant.

When a safety net is placed by the State under the life you hold in your hands, the instinct to protect is frustrated. You cannot feel dependent upon when, in the ultimate, you are not. The Christian Socialist dream is thus haunted by a huge internal contradiction. In how many areas of modern life in Britain does a citizen face the likelihood that another would go hungry, or cold, or die without him? Seldom, we hope. The State should meet need where no other help is forthcoming. But in meeting need, it denies its citizens satisfaction of a subtler need, much harder to articulate or lobby for: the need to be needed. The conflict is insoluble. Few children in Britain will know quite the degradation of that retarded boy on the pavement in Puno; and only a few fathers will ever know the joy of the little girl's father, on the bus from Pisac.

Matthew Parris

Philip Howard

What's in a toponym? A sincere form of flattery

Mecca is a good name for a bingo hall, except for the most paranoid of Muslims. Muslim community leaders are misguided to object to the name. Muhammad's birthplace, where all good Muslims hope to go on their hajj some day, has had strong human magnetic qualities for 14 centuries. So in English and other languages it has become a toponym (a place name that because of its glamour has become a common noun) for a place that people long to visit, the birthplace of a faith, a cult or a policy. "Lord's," cliché-mongers are apt to say, "is the Mecca of cricket."

Thus to describe a bingo hall as a Mecca may be coming on a bit strong, but it is neither blasphemous nor irreverent. Bingo is a mill-and-water and respectable form of gambling. And the strongest drink taken at bingo is tea. Moreover, Mecca itself is not given a favourable press even in the Koran: "God has afflicted the city [Mecca] with famine and fear as a punishment for what its people did." And it is just as well that Paradise has not been turned into a more precise toponym. The Koran's luscious description of gardens and fountains, rich silks and brocades, goblets of wine that gives no hangover, and regiments of "bashful virgins whom neither man nor jinnah will have touched before" suggests a more exciting place than a bingo hall.

Our present is filled with the verbal shades and echoes of our past. And there is no rhyme or reverence about the process by which the names of people and places pass into the common currency of language. It is egregious when they do, for the words "stand out from the common herd". Lycium is a perfectly good toponym for a dance hall. The young men studied dancing and wrestling as well as philosophy at Aristotle's original Lycium, now under a car park near Kolonosaki Square. For the Romans this Colosseum was the place for mass melodramatic spectacles. Colosseum(s) in modernised spellings do the same today for modern blockbusters. The birthplace of the Christian Saviour was adopted as the common name for a lunatic asylum.

Oxford has made many toponyms: marmalade, trousers (Oxford bags), clay, curries (in printing), frames and religious enthusiasms. Only the shoes called oxfords can properly be printed without a capital letter. Its loss marks the final stage of transition from place name to common toponym.

Genies is the French name for Genoa, read by extension for a traditional style of trousers worn by Genoese sailors. Serge de Nines (denim) was the name of a tough blue sailcloth woven in the French town.

Levi Strauss (1829-1902) was a Bavarian who emigrated to New York at the age of 14 to join his brothers in supplying the new frontiersmen of the California Gold Rush. The Levi brothers had the notion of matching the denim cloth with the Genoese trousers, and strengthening the seams and pockets with brass rivets used for horse harness. This became the most durable and universal garment in the history of fashion. A German immigrant used French materials and Italian style to create blue jeans, an archetypal American product.

Toponyms enrich the language with history. They are not as common as eponyms, because of the pride of inventors and finders: eschschol(ia) (given in 1821 by A. von Chamisso in compliment to J. F. von Eschscholtz, one of his colleagues in the Romanoff exploring expedition that classified the golden-California poppy, and a trick question for spelling bees), begonia, and subrieta (the French painter Claude Aubriet), dahlias and magnolia. But toponyms also play their part in the mazarika (Mazovia, Poland) of language. The astorian was wearing a babushka and a gause (Gaza) bikini. The Labrador was dressed in a muslin (Mosul, Iraq) tuxedo (Tuxedo Park Country Club, New York) over a suede (Sweden) duffel coat (Duffel, Antwerp). They had reached the Mecca of dogs' dinners. It consists of pheasant from Phasis in Georgia, hamburgers, sardines and curvants (Corinth) in mayonnaise (Maha, Minorca), lapped down with sherry, champagne and bourbon. After this Venetian blind, they went on a canine conga (Congo). As well as a holy city, Mecca is an honourable toponym.

Cherry picker

THERE is an endearing consistency to the alcoholic preferences of the Prince of Wales: 30 years after he was remarried at Gordonstoun for ordering a cherry brandy in a pub, I can disclose that he will grant a royal warrant to Shepherd Neame. Their merchandise? Cherry brandy, drunk by Terry-Thomas and Belgian police types. "The Prince is giving us the warrant specifically for our cherry brandy," says a toper in their Kent HQ. "It was Queen Victoria's favourite drink and now Prince Charles appears to be very fond of it, too — he orders it by the crateful." Other drink dealers to be honoured this year by the Prince in the forthcoming Royal Warrant list include the champagne house, Laurent-Perrier, and Berry Bros, which supplies him with King's Ginger Liqueur, a potent brew once popular with Edward VII.

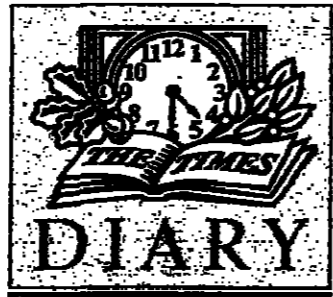
The Prince's palate is no less refined when it comes to solids. His new list of tradesmen includes the crimping expensive Jermyn Street cheesemonger, Paxton & Whitfield, and McPhersons Atlantic, which specialises in exotic mushrooms. "Prince Charles is particularly fond of our chateaufort and trompette — we deliver boxes of them to Buckingham Palace," says a fungus-grower. "He sometimes comes out picking with us." Despite the AA's bleating about the dangers of talking while driving, the Prince has also honoured a car-phone supplier.



Prince Charles: lingering taste

Hampshire Radio-Phones. It's all so different from Princess Diana's day. No new warrants have been issued to frock designers.

After years of declining support, the Tories have signed up some new members: G Pinochet, A Scargill and one H Lester. All were sent membership cards after postal applications carrying the names



of the unlikely characters were sent to Smith Square by Friday Night Armistice, the irreverent show on BBC2. Showing how desperate Tories are to attract new supporters, Gary Glitter and Darth Vader lookalikes successfully signed up.

Vanity Clare

FOLLOWING my disclosure that Clare Short has burnt £40,000 of her International Development Department's bonasi-sized budget on market research, I learn of another project boosting the minister's image: the launch of a fanzine which will lovingly record her work. Ms Short, who, as I have also noted is co-operating with makers of an ersatz "Clare: the movie" documentary, has approved the launch of Developments without setting a budget.

"Her name is mentioned very occasionally," says an aide. "Not all the costs are quantifiable. It is necessary we publicise what the department does." Remarks a Tory: "Sounds like Vanity Fair."

Price check

THE newlywed Hagues will have to place embarrassing addendums on the mountain of thank-you letters for their generous wedding presents. A request for the price of each gift is required so that Hague can meet the tough strictures on

gifts received by MPs laid down by Sir Gordon Downey, the Standards Commissioner. "Any gifts received by an MP or spouse of an MP which relate to his membership of the House, and which are worth over £25 must be declared upon the Register of Members' Interests. The scandal caused by a £100 coffee pot given to Anthony Crossland for opening a building could yet haunt Hague. To discover whether William must display his newly acquired family silver, I turned to a leading expert on Downey's law, Neil Hamilton: "William should put his presents on display in Westminster Hall, with price labels on each item. People should bid for the gifts."

Playing Balls

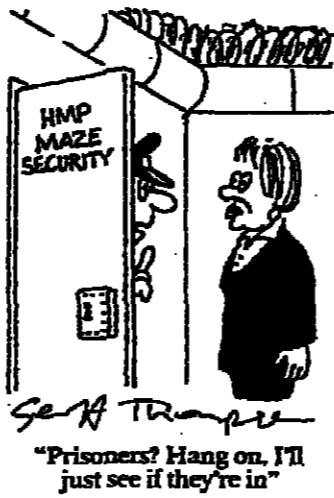
NICK HORNBY, the author of *Fever Pitch*, would appreciate new Labour's first big wedding tomorrow: guests have been asked to bring their football boots. Once ceremonies are over, Ed Balls — who runs the Treasury for his boss Gordon Brown — and the comely Yvette Cooper, a new Labour MP, want friends, both male and female, to knock a ball around. This should create a hearty appetite for fish and chips afterwards. This proletarian jaspery contrasts with the stag night — a discreet affair



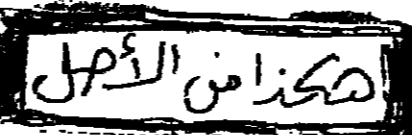
Cooper: wedding match

for close friends — where drinks were enjoyed at Quaglin's, followed by dinner at Pont de la Tour. The best man should stick to football anecdotes — perhaps about Balls's birth. Ed's father, also a football fanatic, was horrified that the projected day for the Baby Balls birth clashed with an FA Cup tie between Manchester United and his beloved Norwich. Naturally, Big Balls chose to attend the Old Trafford match.

JASPER GERARD



"Prisoners? Hang on, I'll just see if they're in"



Forthcoming marriages



COURT CIRCULAR

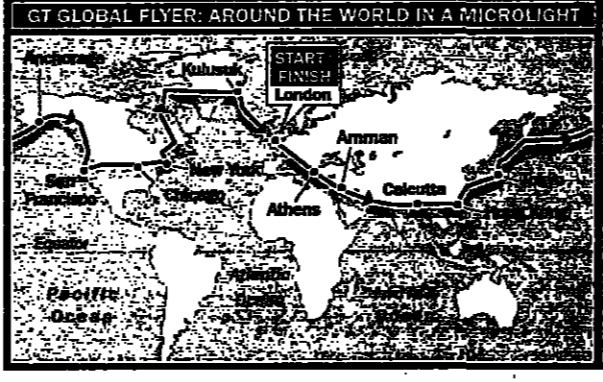
BUCKINGHAM PALACE
January 8: The Princess Royal, President of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, this morning attended a Highland Carers Day at the Town House, Inverness, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Inverness-shire (the Lord Gray of Contin).



Keith Reynolds, left, and Brian Milton with their microlight yesterday

Microlight pair travel in footsteps of Phileas Fogg

By TIM JONES
STRAPPED into a large hang-glider with a motorbike engine slung underneath, two Englishmen are to attempt to be the first to circumnavigate the globe in a microlight aircraft.



School news

Arnold School, Blackpool
The Lent Term began on January 6 and will end on March 27. Mr Keith Gedhill, MBE, CSJ, DL, has retired as Chairman of Governors after 15 years of outstanding service and is succeeded by Sir Martin Holdgate, CB, MA Phd (Cantab).

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Gilbert Abbott & Beckett, comic writer, London: 181; Charles Kipling, cricketer, Brentwood, Essex, 187; Chaim Bialik, poet, Riga, Ukraine, 1873; John Watson, psychologist, Greenview, South Carolina, 1878; Lascelles Abercrombie, poet and critic, Ashton-upon-Mersey, 1881; Karl Capek, writer and dramatist, Male Svatonovice, Czechoslovakia, 1890; Dame Grace Field, singer, Rochdale, Lancashire, 1896; Simone de Beauvoir, novelist and critic, Paris, 1908; Rose Louise Horvick, (Sydney Rose Lee), actress and striptease artiste, 1914.

Mr C.S.W. Alcock and Miss A.L. White

The engagement is announced between Christopher, son of Mr and Mrs T.D. Alcock, of Birstall, Leicestershire, and Amanda, daughter of Mr and Mrs G.J.D. White, of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

Mr J.S. Harvatan and Miss G. Kidd

The engagement is announced between John Simon, elder son of Mr and Mrs J.K. Harvatan, of Clannagh House, Isle of Man, and Gillian, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs G. Kidd, of Merchiston Park, Edinburgh.

Mr G. Harper and Miss S.E. Nathan

The engagement is announced between Garry, youngest son of Mr and Mrs W.B. Harper, of Bradwell, Derbyshire, and Sally, daughter of Dr and Mrs J. Nathan, of Limpfield, Surrey.

Mr J.D. Hope and Miss A.S. Minchin

The engagement is announced between Jason, elder son of Mr and Mrs Derek Hope, of Dumelin, New Zealand, and Alexandra, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Minchin, of Wadlurst, East Sussex.

Mr P.H. Hopkins and Miss L.L. Klemme

The engagement is announced between Peter, eldest son of the late Lieutenant Colonel E.P.T. Blake, and Mrs L.L. Klemme, of Tilford, Surrey, and Imela, elder daughter of Herr and Frau Josef Klemme, of Langfeld, Schleswig, Germany.

Medical Officers of Schools Association

The Annual General Meeting of the Medical Officers of Schools Association will take place on Saturday, January 10, 1998, at the Lynton Hotel, West Sussex.

Legal appointments

Council of HM Circuit Judges
The following have been elected Officers of the Council of HM Circuit Judges: President, Judge Paul Clarke Senior (Leeds); Vice President, Judge Christopher Phillips (Leeds); Treasurer, Judge David Smith (Leeds); Secretary, Judge Stephen Downes (Leeds).

University news

Oxford
The Queen's College
To scholarships: Emma Louise Matthews, formerly of Newman College, Preston. Simon Webster McKnight, formerly of St John's College, Cambridge.

Appointments

To be Deputy Lieutenants of Greater London:
The Hon. Queen Elizabeth was destroyed by fire in Hong Kong harbour, 1972.

Luncheon

Blacksmiths' Company
Mr Tim Herring, Prime Warden of the Blacksmiths' Company, presided at the cutting and distribution of the Epiphany Cake at a luncheon held yesterday at the Guildhall, London.

Dinner

Lord Mayor
The Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress entertained at dinner at the Mansion House last evening the Chief Commissioner and Members of the Court of Common Council, the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Mayoress and Leaders of Aldermen, High Officers of the Corporation of London and Ward Clerks of the City of London.

BMDS: 0171 680 6880 PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 1982 FAX: 0171 481 9313

BIRTHS

At 22.00 on 28th December 1997, to Rebecca (née Latham) and G.H., a daughter, London. Her godparents are Bob and Shirley, remembering Mrs Winifred.

DEATHS

CRAWFORD - Robert Norman CBE, peacefully on 4th January 1998, at the age of 81, at Alexandra Hall, Duxford, Cambridgeshire.

WANTED

MISSING - A memorial service for the late Mr. David Holbrook, former chairman of the Association of District Councils, 67, Miss Joan Baez, folk singer, 57, Mrs M. L. S. Bennett, former Principal of Hilda's College, Oxford, 85, Mr Harvey Betram-Brown, former chairman of the British Association of Kleinwort-Benson Group, 62, Mr Simon Swynfen, President of the Society of Antiquaries of London, 55, Mrs Justice Ognall, 55, Mrs Joely Richardson, actress, 33, Mrs Vicky Tuck, Principal, Cheltenham Ladies' College, 45, Ms Joan Ullwaller, 55, Mr Geoffrey Wrang, racehorse trainer, 68, Miss Susannah York, actress, 56.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

HERVEY - A memorial service for the late Mr. H.E. Hervey (aged 72) will be held in the Church of St. Andrew, 10, The Quadrant, London, on Friday, 12th January, 1998, at 11.30 am. Please phone Mrs V. Hervey, 12, The Quadrant, London, W1A 1AB for details.

TICKETS FOR SALE

FLATSBASE
FLATSBASE
FLATSBASE
FLATSBASE
FLATSBASE

DAVID
PERSONAL COLUMN
PERSONAL COLUMN
PERSONAL COLUMN

OBITUARIES

SIR FRANK ROBERTS

Sir Frank Roberts, GCMG, GCVO, diplomat, died on January 7 aged 90. He was born on October 27, 1907.

Sir Frank Roberts's 38-year career in the British Foreign Service... He saw service before the war in the Foreign Office and in Paris and Cairo.

But the prolonged achievement which followed his retirement from the Foreign Service in 1968 came close to outshining his official career.

In his 84th year he published a solid book about his diplomatic experiences, Dealing with Dictators.

He continued vigorously active virtually until his death, in demand as a chairman of meetings, as a dinner guest and as a public speaker.

Frank Kenyon Roberts was born in Buenos Aires, and educated at Bedales, Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge.

When war broke out he was just 32, serving in the Foreign Office's Central Department in London, a coming man of phenomenal vigour and intelligence.

Before he achieved an embassy of his own, Roberts experienced one check, perhaps the only one in his career.



In due course he and his wife found their feet in India, and by the time they left it had broadened still further their formidable experience.

London, to which Roberts returned in 1951, was more his cup of tea. He filled a Deputy Under Secretary's post, one of the seven most senior appointments in the

Foreign Office, for three busy years before his appointment as Ambassador in Belgrade in 1954.

Roberts was fortunate in the timing of each of his ambassadorships. He went to Belgrade in 1954, at a time when it had real importance.

in the Non-Aligned Movement, mending some of his fences with Moscow and holding his diverse federal republic together.

to be Ambassador to Nato in Brussels in 1957. He was serving there when American missiles with nuclear warheads were deployed in Europe for the first time, when Harold Macmillan went to Moscow in his white fur hat in search of a new hope in East-West relations.

In 1960 Roberts moved to Moscow, where the beleaguered Khrushchev had embarked on the adventurous foreign policy that was to lead to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 and eventually to his own eclipse.

Roberts's intellectual reputation was established and his phenomenal energy was acknowledged. But to all these posts he brought also a gift for dealing with people.

and in Bonn he commanded the respect due to a man who was always master of his brief, could almost always persuade his Government, and who was untriflingly curious.

He made the transition from public service in 1968 without missing a beat. His recent German connections provided a firm base in private sector directorships and public organisations.

Roberts's wife died in 1990. They were childless, and she was throughout a long marriage his constant companion and support; her loss might have marked the end of his formidable energies and love of life, but he rode out this blow, and an increasing range of physical handicaps, undaunted.

DAVID WAINWRIGHT

David Wainwright, author and journalist, died from lung cancer on January 5 aged 68. He was born on February 21, 1929.



DAVID WAINWRIGHT wrote 19 books, covering a variety of topics, from midwifery to journalism. His earliest works were concerned with youth training.

David Wainwright was born on Merseyside, the only child of Thomas and Mary Wainwright. His father, a civil servant, was the youngest of a large family and the first to go to university.

He was called up for National Service before university, and joined the Royal Army Service Corps. In 1948, when he was a second lieutenant, he was given command of a typical Army whifny of HIM, The King's Baggage.

was detailed to take charge of the convoy of six 3-ton trucks that had fought their way across North Africa with the 8th Army and subsequently been used to carry the royal luggage from Buckingham Palace to the railway stations.

After Oxford, where he read English, Wainwright in 1952 joined the Evening News, which had the largest circulation of the then three London evening newspapers.

university students, particularly at Oxford and Cambridge, and Wainwright was recruited while still an undergraduate. He stayed with the paper variously as chief foreign writer, feature writer, leader correspondent, diary editor and travel editor for 22 years.

At one time Wainwright was secretary of the Whitefriars Club, a dining club which met in the Cock Tavern in Fleet Street and brought together journalists and people in literary publishing.

Yet what mattered most to him were his books. Later in his life he wrote the stories of some of Britain's most interesting companies, including a history of Simpsons, the Piccadilly department store (with a foreword by the Duke of Edinburgh) in 1966.

TAMARA GEVA

Tamara Geva, dancer and actress, died in New York on December 9 aged about 90. She was born in St Petersburg, probably in 1907.



TAMARA GEVA's career in the theatre spread across two continents and extended from ballet in St Petersburg, through musicals and straight plays in New York and London to Hollywood films.

George Balanchine made a big dance sequence for Geva to end each half. In the Princess Zenobia ballet, audiences tended only gradually to realise that it was a spoof.

Geva played the lead in the Broadway and Shaftesbury Avenue premieres of On Your Toes, but not in the film. That went to the younger, prettier Vera Zorina, who had become Balanchine's second wife.

highly prosperous one manufacturing gold brocades and other costly textiles for ecclesiastical and imperial court use.

He used his wealth to build up a private museum and theatre, and to support young artists, including Mayakovsky. This saved him after the Revolution, when both his wealth and his source attracted disapproval.

floppy hair. To sustain themselves they danced in privately arranged shows and even performed in nightclubs — she singing, he at the piano. They were paid usually in flour, salt or coffee (she liked coffee best because the grounds could be recycled for cakes).

The group decided against returning to Russia, and made for Paris, but they found no more work and were at their wits' end when suddenly they received an invitation to audition for the Diaghilev Ballet.

remained good friends for the rest of his life. After a further year, she left the company. Geva now accepted an invitation to tour America as guest star with Nikita Balieff's Chauve Souris variety show; Balanchine made three contracted solos for her.

After the big hit of On Your Toes, Geva decided there was more future in straight theatre. After some mediocre parts, her breakthrough came when Robert Sherwood saw her in a summer production of his Idiots' Delight.

Her films were less memorable, but her choreography for Le Spectre de la Rose was admired, and so was her direction of a BBC television documentary of Diaghilev in 1979. Her colourful account of her early years, Split Seconds, was published in 1972.

PERSONAL COLUMN

PERSONAL COLUMN containing various advertisements for services like flights, real estate, and immigration.

ON THIS DAY January 9, 1907. LORD BADEN-POWELL O.M. The origin of the Boy Scout movement, though it has been a matter of some controversy, is simple enough.

NEWS

Mowlam offers to see IRA prisoners

Mo Mowlam took another controversial step in her attempt to save the Northern Ireland peace process by offering to meet IRA prisoners as well as loyalists when she visits the Maze prison today.

Cook's wife tells of marriage break-up

Tony Blair wrote to the jilted wife of Robin Cook expressing sympathy about the coverage of the Foreign Secretary's illicit affair but omitting to say he was sorry that their 28-year marriage was over.

Tornado damage

A huge repair operation continues in Selsey, West Sussex, today after a 100mph tornado cut through the town and damaged 1,000 buildings.

Death threat charge

A successful financial expert sent a series of death threats to colleagues after being suspended just as he was due to fly off with his wife on a company trip to Mexico.

Dewar for Scotland

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, ended months of speculation by confirming he will stand for election to a Scottish parliament.

Circus change

A member of the Chipperfield circus family could face criminal charges in Florida for shooting dead a Bengal tiger after it savaged his brother.

Royal dismay

Buckingham Palace became alarmed that it would have to deal with trades unions after "disgruntled" employees joined a union in protest at low pay after the war.

Yoghurt diet

The latest development in dietary aids, a yoghurt that is supposed to make those who eat it feel full, went on sale in Sweden.

100-day fast

Paul Adler-Collins, former sergeant and failed businessman, who turned to Buddhism, has become the first to complete a 100-day fast for 36 years.

Slow: Sheffield roads ahead

Sheffield has the worst average road speed outside London, a measly 17 mph. In Peterborough drivers can bowl along at an average 34 mph, thanks to a network of dual carriageways.



Pierre Cardin holds the hand of prima ballerina Maya Plisetskaya after a "Fashion and Dance" concert in St Petersburg

Preview: Lynda Bellingham and Julia Sawalha return in the mother-daughter sitcom Faith in the Future (TV, 8.30pm). Review: Matthew Bond on an impressive start for John Sullivan's musical comedy. Pages 46, 47

Time out time A Clinton-Jones trial would be a high-tech peep show with no positive prospects. Every possible effort should be made to ensure that it need not happen. Page 21

Brave heart, cool head After a lifetime of campaigning for a Scottish Parliament, Donald Dewar looks set to reap his reward. Page 21

Tiger turns Tigers are predators, not performers. They are wild, ungainly beasts with visceral instincts that cannot be tamed by captivity. Page 21

MATTHEW PARRIS When a safety net is placed by the State under the life you hold in your hands, the instinct to protect is frustrated. You cannot feel dependent upon when, in the ultimate, you are not. The Christian Socialist dream is thus haunted by a huge internal contradiction. Page 20

JOHN LLOYD Huge concessions have been made and are still being made to terrorists to keep the politicians talking; they cannot be justified, except on the basis that the talking is expected to produce settlement. Page 20

PHILIP HOWARD Mecca is a good name for a bingo hall, except for the most paranoid of Muslims. Muslim community leaders are misguided to object to the name. Page 20

Sir Frank Roberts, diplomat; Tamara Gova, dancer, and actress; David Wainwright, journalist and author. Page 23

Road congestion: Ulster; Westminster development; Armed Forces; charities; CAP; bread; Church and fighting; plastic cards. Page 21

7, 14, 25, 32, 36, 38. Bonus 44. Two shared the £4.2m jackpot

Amey: The facilities management arm of the construction group, has been raided by Ministry of Defence police investigating suspected irregularities involving maintenance contracts. Page 25

Swimming: The Chinese team at the world championships in Australia were in the dock after customs officials unearthed a vacuum flask full of suspected human growth hormone. Page 48

Top job: The big cheese being wooed is the star turn in some of the most vicious takeover battles of the past decade. Richard Morrison on the Arts Council. Page 33

Taylor maid: Taylor Hackford tells why he married Helen Mirren, the woman he calls "the greatest actress in the world". Page 19

Asia: American growth could suffer a significant hit and remove the need for any further rise in interest rates, says an influential US central banker. Page 25

Football: Andy Hinchcliffe's proposed £3 million transfer from Everton to Tottenham collapsed unexpectedly when an Achilles problem was revealed. Page 44

Top flight: Benedict Nightingale watches the stars of the Cirque du Soleil's new show at the Albert Hall fly, bend, spin, contort and generally flout gravity. Page 33

Sales girl: Jane Shilling advises salesgoers on how to sort the desirable from the disastrous. Go for classic neutrals. Page 18

Channel 4: Vanni Treves, the Italian-born senior partner at Macfarlanes, the City law firm, is to become the next chairman of Channel 4. Page 25

Rugby union: The 12 Allied Dunbar Premiership first division clubs were urged to consider a new format for fixtures in order to encourage them not to pull out of European competition. Page 45

Top idea: What do Bob Dylan, Pete Townshend and Leonard Cohen have in common? Thirty years after Woodstock, their children are aiming to follow them into rock stardom. Page 35

Making a difference: Television does make a difference, says Kate Blewett, the TV producer whose documentaries exposed China's "dying room" orphanages and other child scandals. Page 36

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 13.0 to 5237.1. The sterling index fell from 104.5 to 103.6 after the pound fell from \$1.6242 to \$1.6155 and from DM2.9656 to DM2.9349. Page 28

Cricket: The England tour party left a rain-soaked Antigua four days early for Jamaica under blue skies. Page 48

BBC mystery: "If the BBC has any sense, it will concentrate on luring Del Boy out of retirement", says Raymond Snoddy. Page 36

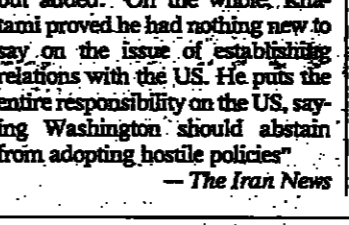
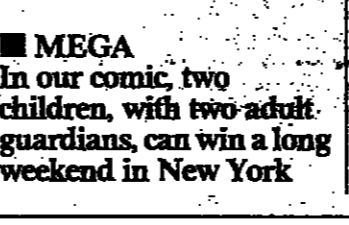
A CNN interview showed that Khatami was "a shrewd politician with the courage to create a logical dialogue with the outside world", but added: "On the whole, Khatami proved he had nothing new to say on the issue of establishing relations with the US. He puts the entire responsibility on the US, saying Washington should abstain from adopting hostile policies". Page 21

Cloning alarm The White House called for a ban on human cloning after claims by the maverick scientist, Richard Seed, that he will begin to clone human beings. Page 16

Hussein 'victory' The CIA has concluded that President Saddam Hussein won the latest standoff over UN weapons inspections and that Syria is seeking an Iraqi alliance. Page 17

WEEKEND Win the meal of a lifetime at a Michelin 3-star restaurant. Plus, food and drink

MEGA In our comic, two children, with two adult guardians, can win a long weekend in New York



MoD police raid American subsidiary head office

THE failure of an American group to pay MoD for its investment in the... American subsidiary head office

Road congestion: Ulster; Westminster development; Armed Forces; charities; CAP; bread; Church and fighting; plastic cards. Page 21

7, 14, 25, 32, 36, 38. Bonus 44. Two shared the £4.2m jackpot

THE failure of an American group to pay MoD for its investment in the... American subsidiary head office

THE failure of an American group to pay MoD for its investment in the... American subsidiary head office

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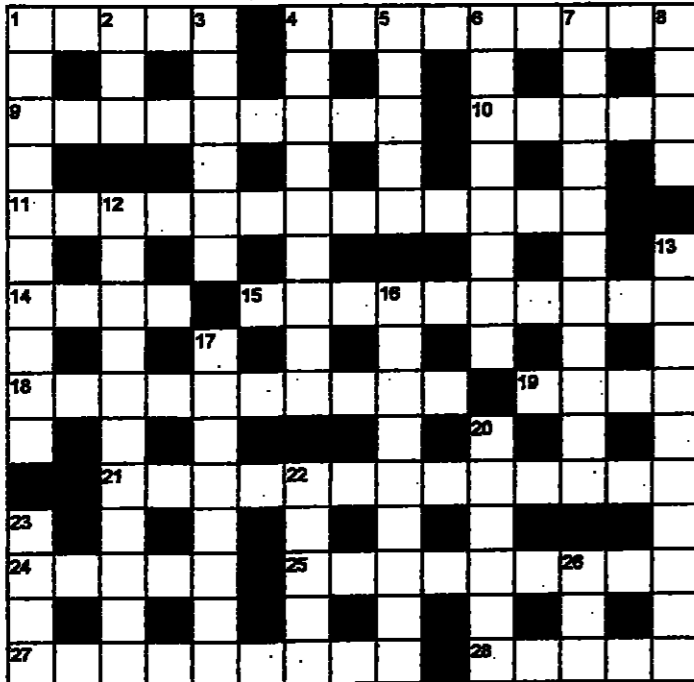
THE failure of an American group to pay MoD for its investment in the... American subsidiary head office

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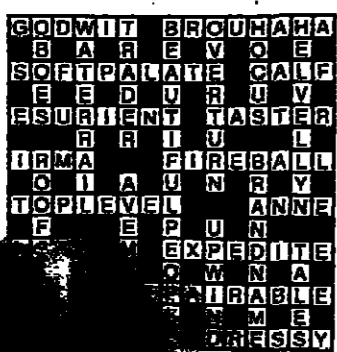
THE failure of an American group to pay MoD for its investment in the... American subsidiary head office

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,684



- ACROSS 1 Girl almost unfit to serve (5). 4 I'm backing inspired song collection relating to old soldiers (9). 9 Rocky inlet with some sedimentary rock (9). 10 Left in common sack (5). 11 No real chance for some to pick brown in Cambridgeshire (7,6). 14 Crow - it travels in straight lines (4). 15 High flier has melody to arrange (5,7). 18 Unwanted companion, one a fool might include (10). 19 Head boy evidently among natural leaders (4). 21 E.g. mix a great pile, totally mixed (7,6). 24 Permit cry of pain to echo round inn (5). 25 Wretch befuddled with ale turning head over heels (9).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,683



- 27 Equipment likely to be worn by soldier unfit for service (9). 28 Gin is a spirit with goodness (5). DOWN 1 It's fashionable, being fully aware about silver (3,3,4). 2 Military branch a marine joined (5). 3 Fewer clothes being worn, for example (6). 4 Light and foolish talk (9). 5 What doctor may be called, in general, about hearts? (5). 6 Soldiers of the Queen, invading German city, succeeded (8). 7 Wanting to soak, new students brought in drink, perhaps (11). 8 Top copy given in Times (4). 12 See red and blue on a single block (4,4,3). 13 Complain about money - a cry goes up - it gets you nowhere (5,5). 16 Diagrams worked out about right - time for a celebration (5,4). 17 Handle measure one's introduced as a radical Parliamentarian (9). 20 Payment put up for piece of furniture (6). 22 Ancient Briton carrying nothing but a bit of lace (5). 23 Stop putting house in area around Perth (4). 26 Old 'ard 'at uses this wood (5).

Times Two Crossword, page 48

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Weather by Fax 0336 401 300

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SUBSCRIPTIONS 0336 401 300

TRAVEL 0336 401 300

General: very mild, but a brisk south to southwest wind. Southeast and eastern England will have brighter skies by the afternoon with a little sunshine, but elsewhere it will stay rather cloudy.

London, SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, E England, Central N, E England: generally cloudy, but very mild with some bright spells later. Moderate southwest wind. Max 14C (57F).

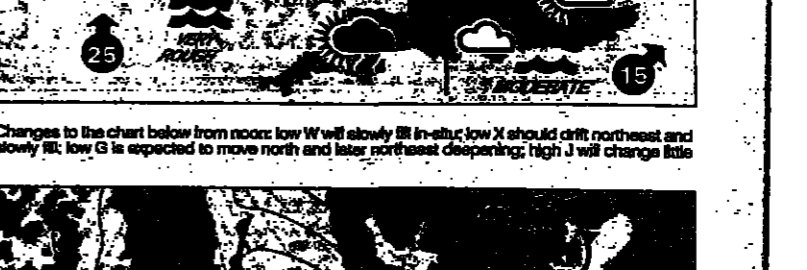
Central S England, W Midlands: mostly dry with occasional bright spells after some early drizzle. Moderate/fresh southwest winds. Max 14C (57F).

Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man: dull and misty with patchy drizzle, especially over coasts and hills. A little afternoon brightness especially inland. Fresh southwesterly winds. Max 14C (57F).

Republic of Ireland: rather cloudy, patchy rain or drizzle in South and West, bright periods in East. Winds fresh or strong, southerly. Very mild. Max 14C, 57F.



Changes to this chart below from noon: low W will slowly fill in; high W should drift northeast and slowly fill; low G is expected to move north and later northeast; high G will change little



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Table with columns for location, AM, HT, PM, HT, TODAY, AM, HT, PM, HT. Lists weather conditions for various UK locations.

Full moon Jan 12

OTIMES NEWSPAPERS LIMITED, 1998. Published and printed and limited for distribution in electronic and all other derivatives forms by Times Newspapers Ltd, PO Box 442, Virginia Street, London E1 6UN, telephone 011-732 5000 and also printed at Colindale, London NW9 1UH, telephone 011-732 5000. Friday, January 9, 1998. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.



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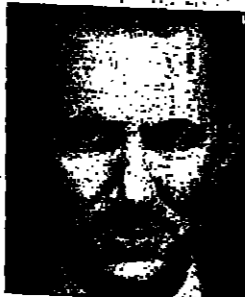
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THE TIMES

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ECONOMICS

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with predictions for
the outlook in 1998
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The producer who
exposed China's
'dying rooms'
PAGES 36-39



SPORT

Spectre of drugs
returns to haunt
Chinese swimming
PAGES 43-48

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
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BUSINESS EDITOR Pattiene Wheatcroft

FRIDAY JANUARY 9 1998

Asian turmoil may hit US growth

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS EDITOR

AMERICAN growth could suffer a significant hit from the Asian crisis, removing the need for any further rise in US interest rates, according to an influential Federal Reserve Board governor.

In a speech on the economic outlook this year, Laurence Meyer, regarded as one of the Fed's more hawkish members, said that growth could be reduced by as much as 0.75 per cent because of continuing turmoil in Asia.

"A slowdown of such a magnitude could be expected to substitute for some or all of the monetary tightening that otherwise might have been justified," he said.

This is the most overt statement so far of US concerns about the deflationary impact of the Asian crisis and a significant hint that thinking on interest rates within the Fed has

shifted. Mr Meyer said that without the impact of Asia, falling US unemployment - to a 24-year low of 4.6 per cent in November - would have supported the case for a rise in US rates late last year.

"But, at that very time, the growing dimension of the Asian turmoil began to cast a shadow over the forecast for 1998," said Mr Meyer, whose remarks coincided with fresh

evidence that the American economy is decelerating. Producer prices unexpectedly fell 0.2 per cent in December and first-time jobless claims jumped by more than forecast.

The US Treasury bond market, already booming on anticipation of deflationary effects from Asia, rallied on hopes that the next move in US rates will be a cut. Shares were depressed by Asian wor-

ries. In early afternoon trade, the Dow Jones industrial average was quoted 87.69 points lower at 7,815.58.

Meanwhile, gold prices slumped again to an 18 1/2-year low of \$281.65 an ounce at the London fix, providing another strand to the debate about impending global deflation.

Increasing public debate in America about the deflationary impact of the Far East

economies came against a background of deepening crisis in Asia with Indonesia becoming the latest victim of the crash of confidence.

The rupiah slumped 18 per cent to a record low of 9,500 against the dollar. The stock market also plunged 18 per cent at its worst point. It closed down 11.95 per cent at 347.11.

Indonesian markets lost their composure after America re-

acted negatively, and in public, to the country's budget proposals unveiled this week.

Larry Summers, US Deputy Treasury Secretary, said on Wednesday that Indonesia needed to show its commitment to reforms agreed as part of the International Monetary Fund's rescue in October.

Fitch IBCA, the credit rating agency, yesterday downgraded Indonesia's long-term for-

eign currency rating. It said: "The making of unrealistic budget proposals which publicly flout recently agreed targets with the International Monetary Fund is a severe blow to confidence."

Later in the day, Standard & Poor's cut Thailand's long-term debt and foreign currency ratings, citing "the deepening financial crisis that is stifling Thailand's growth prospects".

Meanwhile, South Korea was engaged in another round of crisis talks with leading international banks in a continuing effort to persuade them to roll over huge short-term loans. Lee Kyung-shik, Governor of the Bank of Korea, made a lightning tour of Paris and London and was due in Frankfurt today in an effort to whip up support from the European bankers.

Commentary, page 27
Stock market, page 28

Pound falls as Bank puts rates on hold

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE pound tumbled after the Bank of England decided not to raise rates at the conclusion of the Monetary Policy Committee's monthly meeting. Sterling fell more than three marks to DM2,934.9 and slid a cent against the dollar to \$1.6155 - its lowest level since mid-October.

Dealers said rumours that the

Bundesbank was making commercial sales of sterling, coupled with reports that a leading UK retail bank and American investment bank were also selling heavily into the market, had contributed to the steep decline.

The Bank's decision not to increase rates from 7.25 per cent had been widely expected after economic data over the past month provided mixed signals on the performance of the economy. Economists said there was

now an increasing perception that rates will only rise a quarter point further and this was starting to depress the pound.

The Confederation of British Industry offered its support for the Bank's decision. Kate Barker, chief economist, said the data pointed to a slowdown in growth and a further rise would "risk having too great an impact when the economy is already expected to be sluggish". The CBI's

own distributive trades survey, which was also released yesterday, showed retailers enjoyed a solid but unspectacular Christmas.

A net balance of 35 per cent of retailers reported improved sales compared with a year ago against 23 per cent in November. The quarterly sales balance also edged up slightly, although the rate of increase was well below the level that was reported in December 1996.

MoD police raid Amey subsidiary head office

By JON ASHWORTH

THE facilities management arm of Amey, the construction group, has been raided by Ministry of Defence police investigating suspected irregularities involving maintenance contracts.

Amey Facilities Management (AFM), which is based in Maidenhead, Berkshire, has launched an internal inquiry into the affair, which is understood to involve work done for the MoD at one particular base.

Facilities management is worth about £200 million a year to Amey, which is contracted to the MoD on road maintenance, building services and similar work.

The development heralds unwelcome publicity for Amey, which is headed by Brian Staples who was ousted last year as chief executive of United Utilities. Mr Staples is suing United Utilities for alleged wrongful dismissal and claiming damages that could exceed £2 million.

Amey has been adept at securing public sector contracts, including roads and railways, along with the man-

agement of MoD property. The MoD police fraud squad raided the AFM head office in November after obtaining warrants under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

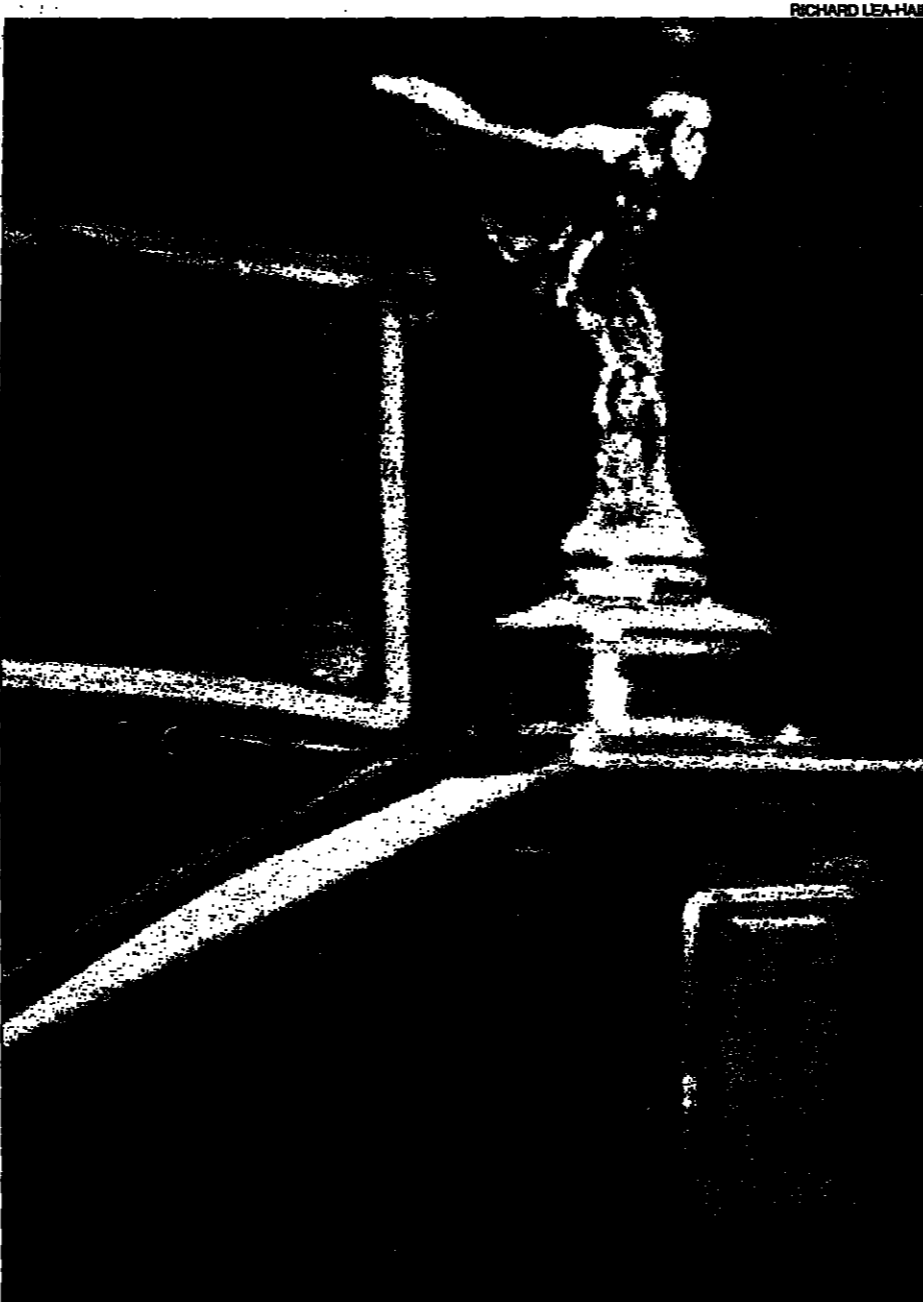
Documents and computer software were seized. The homes of AFM employees were also raided. Copies were made and the material was later returned.

The MoD said that suspicions were raised during routine checks although some believe that the action is the result of a "grudge" by a rival contractor.

Investigators are looking into suspected irregularities in an area of contract management. The investigation is at an early stage and no arrests have been made.

AFM has launched an internal review and commissioned an independent audit from outside consultants.

Bill Latta, AFM's managing director, said that the company would co-operate fully with the MoD and expected to be fully exonerated. The company continues to be invited to tender by the MoD.



Michael Shrimpton yesterday called on Rolls owners to defend the honour of the Silver Lady

R-R owners and dealers meet to bid for marque

By ADAM JONES

ROLLS-ROYCE enthusiasts were asked to defend the honour of the Silver Lady yesterday by a group of owners who want to arrange a bid for the luxury carmaker to keep it in British hands.

An action committee of Rolls-Royce and Bentley owners met for the first time near Northampton, with some travelling from as far afield as Scotland and Finland. The committee wants to raise enough UK money to buy Rolls-Royce Motors from under the nose of BMW, widely seen as the most likely buyer after Rolls-Royce was put up for auction by Vickers last year.

The committee, led by Michael Shrimpton, a barrister, is backed by the Rolls-Royce enthusiasts club. It is seeking to exploit the legendary network of Rolls-Royce owners, and has already received donations for a "fighting fund".

The bulk of any bid money would be more likely to come from other sources. Bernie Ecclestone, the Formula One chief, has been approached; Mr Shrimpton is also sounding out venture capitalists.

Vickers maintains that only a dedicated carmaker can own Rolls-Royce successfully because of the scale of investment needed, making a foreign sale seem inevitable. Mr Shrimpton said it was not necessary for Rolls-Royce to be sold overseas

however. "Vickers underestimates the extent of technical expertise available in this country."

The meeting was held at Paulerspury, the site of the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation. In dusty sales ledgers the Queen rubs shoulders with Elvis Presley, John Lennon and Jayne Mansfield.

Not all the owners present yesterday had strong feelings about German ownership. One admitted bringing his vintage car to sell numbers for the TV cameras and press.

Sales of Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars climbed for the fourth year in a row last year. Vickers said a total of 1,919 were sold, compared with 1,744 in 1996.

Treves wins Channel 4 post

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR



Treves suggested by ITC

VANNI TREVES, the Italian-born senior partner at Macfarlanes, the City law firm, is to become the next chairman of Channel 4. He beat off competition from Sir Colin Southgate, chairman of EML, who had been lobbying strongly for the post.

Mr Treves, 57, will take over from Sir Michael Bishop, the chairman of British Midland, whose five-year term of office ended ten days ago.

He is the choice of the Independent Television Commission (ITC), the body which regulates commercial television and which chooses the chairman of the 15-year-old

channel. The ITC has sent its recommendation to Chris Smith, Secretary of State for National Heritage, who is understood to have approved the choice. An announcement is expected next week.

Mr Treves, who is married with three children, was born in Florence and arrived here more than 50 years ago, speaking not a word of English. His father was killed fighting for the Allies in the battle to liberate Florence in 1944.

His firm, Macfarlanes, looks after Richard Branson's family trusts and Mr Treves acts personally for John Paul Getty II, the billionaire.

Araskog to receive \$175m as ITT yields to takeover

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

RAND ARASKOG, the ITT chairman who had fought tooth and nail to stay in charge of the US hotel and entertainment group, will receive more than \$175 million (£110 million) after agreeing to the \$13.7 billion takeover by Starwood Lodgings scheduled to be completed next month.

According to documents filed at the Securities & Exchange Commission, ITT will take a \$750 million charge against profits in connection with the takeover. Some \$350

million will be used to pay for directors' share options. ITT declined to detail individual payouts but confirmed that Mr Araskog will receive at least half of the \$350 million.

An ITT spokesman said: "It's really a clearing of the deck to allow Starwood to embark with a clean sheet." He said the charge could rise another 10 per cent.

The write-off includes \$175 million for the firing of ITT employees and \$110 million for the early retirement of

debt. Costs from fighting off a hostile bid from Hilton Hotels totalled \$34 million.

Mr Araskog and Steven Bollenbach, the Hilton chairman, had fought what was said to have been the dirtiest US takeover battle of 1996. Mr Araskog's steadfastness drove up the bid price per share from \$55 to \$82.

Starwood will be the world's largest hotel group with 650 properties after the acquisition. Trust invasion, page 29

Coal crisis takes Mandelson underground

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

PETER MANDELSON will today take time off from his work on the Millennium Dome to go down a coal mine. He will meet Richard Budge, chief executive of RJB Mining, and Yorkshire miners as the Government attempts to map out an energy policy

and looks at plans for the long-term future of the coal industry.

The presence of the Government's chief policy co-ordinator and Tony Blair's right-hand adviser at Kellingley colliery near Wakefield, will send clear signals that the future of coal is being determined at the highest level. Mr Mandelson will go underground at Kellingley with Mr

Budge and John Grogan, the MP for Selby. Afterwards he will talk to miners at the pit, which is one of RJB's larger collieries. The visit is outside the general duties of the Minister Without Portfolio, currently preoccupied with plans for the Millennium Dome in Greenwich.

Mr Budge is expected to press Mr Mandelson on the urgency needed to

set out a future for coal, in which the UK has abundant reserves. Mr Mandelson moved to play a role in the coal controversy a few months ago. At an emergency debate on industry, which stands to lose up to eight pits and 5,000 jobs because of reduced contracts from the electricity generators, he sat beside John Battle, the Energy Minister. The Prime

Minister then swiftly removed the issue from the Department of Trade and Industry - putting Richard Caborne, Minister for the Regions, in charge of an action plan and directing Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, to implement part of it.

A spokesman for RJB said the company welcomed the interest Mr Mandelson was showing.

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National Power leads venture in Zimbabwe

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL POWER is to put more than £240 million into Southern Africa's first substantial independent power project.

The UK's largest generator will take the lead in a £925 million joint venture in Zimbabwe with the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority and Rio Tinto Zimbabwe. It will take a stake of 60 per cent to 80 per cent in the equity. Equity will make up 30 per cent of the costs at the Gokwe North station in north-west Zimbabwe. The investment is the latest in a long run of international developments by the generator, which has now spent more than £1 billion overseas.

Keith Henry, chief executive, said: "Zimbabwe currently imports a substantial proportion of its electricity from neighbouring utilities to meet its growing needs. The Gokwe North power project could produce around a third of the country's power demand and act as a catalyst for further growth and regional development."

National Power expects to invest in further projects in Southern Africa. The company made £67 million from overseas operations in the first six months of its financial year and expects that figure to double in the full year.



John Baker, left, chairman, and Keith Henry, chief executive, of National Power, which has invested £1 billion overseas and expects to back more projects

Slaughter and May tops City table of takeover legal teams

By JON ASHWORTH

GUINNESS has been good for Slaughter and May, the City law firm, which emerged as the top legal adviser on UK public takeovers in 1997.

Advising on the £9.8 billion merger of Guinness and Grand Metropolitan (now Diageo) helped Slaughter and May to head the annual league table compiled by *Acquisitions Monthly*. The other three law

firms involved — Theodore Goddard, Norton Rose and SJ Berwin — took the top slots among advisers to companies, relegating Linklaters & Paines from first to fifth place.

Slaughter and May also topped the wider league of legal advisers working for financial advisers or companies on UK public takeovers. It worked on 32 deals worth a combined £19.6 billion in 1997. In addition to

being the sole legal adviser to GrandMet in the merger, the firm also acted for Williams Holdings in its £1.3 billion takeover of Chubb Security and advised Energy Group in the attempted £3.6 billion takeover by PacificCorp of America.

The City earned an estimated £1.3 billion in fees from UK takeovers in 1997, of which law firms won £400 million. Allen & Overy is ranked second to

Slaughter and May. It worked on 12 deals worth £12.2 billion, including acting for Cable & Wireless Communications on its £1 billion merger with NYNEX CableComms.

Linklaters & Paines took third place in the wider league, advising on 33 deals worth £11.9 billion. Newcomers include an American firm, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, which worked on five UK public deals worth a combined

£3.6 billion. Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly*, said: "Until now US law firms have not made the same impact as their investment banking cousins. Maybe this is the start of a big push."

Freshfields slipped one place to fourth in the wider league, followed by Norton Rose (up from 11), SJ Berwin, Theodore Goddard, Herbert Smith, and Ashurst Morris Crisp. Clifford Chance was tenth.

A separate league shows accountants stealing a march on the merchant banks when it comes to private transactions: KPMG Corporate Finance advised on 236 private deals worth £2.8 billion in 1997, followed by Coopers & Lybrand (137 deals worth £1.7 billion) and Ernst & Young (115 deals worth £1.4 billion).

The accountants have yet to make any significant inroads with respect to public company takeovers, where the sector remains dominated by the big merchant banks.

Spring Ram £3m disposal near

By CHRIS AVRES

SPRING RAM, the troubled bedrooms and kitchens group, yesterday said it expected to complete the £3 million disposal of its Rest Assured beds brand by the end of January.

The company, whose shares have collapsed from 130p to 17½p since 1993, is selling the division for cash to

Silentnight, the UK's biggest beds group. The deal is part of a £42 million disposal programme which has included the recent sales of Crosby Doors, Merewood Cabinets, GT Rackstraw and a ten-acre property at Birstall, Leeds.

Martin Towers, finance director, said: "Rest Assured is essentially a non-core business for us, because we're

mainly involved in kitchens, bathrooms and sinks. Its got a very attractive brand name, modern facilities and located in West Yorkshire, the centre of bed making. So it's a very useful combination for Silentnight."

He added that the cash raised from the sale would be used to help to reduce gearing, which is expected to be cut

from nearly 80 per cent to just 20 per cent after the disposal programme.

Mr Towers said the company is still recovering from its troubles in 1995, when it was hit by rising raw materials prices and the loss of a contract with B&Q. He added: "During 1997 the market was patchy, and there were good months and bad months."

National Savings cuts rates for new savers

NATIONAL SAVINGS yesterday reduced interest rates on new sales of five-year bonds and Savings Certificates, despite failing to attract enough savers with its products last year. Rates on five different investments are being reduced by between 0.25 and 0.5 per cent for all new customers. The announcement comes just two months after it was revealed that lacklustre sales at National Savings had forced Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, to cut the agency's funding target by a third to £2 billion.

In March last year it was estimated that National Savings would contribute £3 billion to the Exchequer in 1997-1998. However, National Savings failed to appeal to investors who found better rates elsewhere and the target had to be cut. National Savings said the reduction in medium term interest rates meant it was making the cuts "in keeping with changes in the market". Fixed interest and index linked certificates have been reduced to 5 per cent and 2.5 per cent plus RPI respectively, while pensioners bonds have dropped to 6.5 per cent and capital bonds have fallen to 6.25 per cent gross.

Goode Durrant up 14%

A FIRMER rental market drove Goode Durrant's first-half profits 14 per cent higher, to £17.4 million. Turnover of the vehicle and equipment hire group rose 36 per cent, to £95.5 million, in the six months to October 31. Michael Waring, chairman, said the company is still seeking to expand through organic growth and occasional acquisitions. Earnings per share rose 17 per cent, to 21.7p. The interim dividend rises 17 per cent, to 3.75p. In September, Durrant bought Transport Development Group for £28.2 million.

Pearson Net widens

PEARSON, the media and entertainment group that owns the *Financial Times*, said it was bringing all its electronic publishing activities for business under one roof. The move would make the FT.com website the hub for the electronic delivery of *Financial Times* content and the specialised company, general news and financial data provided by FT Profile and other FT information services. The company said yesterday that substantial elements of the expanded FT.com would be subscription based.

Coda losses continue

SHARES in Coda, the information technology group, fell from 144p to 126½p yesterday after it announced a pre-tax loss of £1.9 million (£4.9 million loss) for the year to October 31. Losses per share were 7.4p (18.5p). Once again directors are not recommending the payment of a dividend. Coda blames an increasingly competitive US market and skilled staff shortages for the poor results. It aims to return to profitability in 1998 with the outlook hopeful after the continued growth in revenue from Client Server financial applications.

Confident Heiton up 27%

HEITON HOLDINGS, the builder's merchant based in Dublin and London, announced interim pre-tax profit up 27 per cent to Ir£6.2 million (£5.1 million). Turnover rose 17 per cent to Ir£84.2 million in the half year to October 31, while earnings per share were up 27 per cent to 8.22p. Directors, who announced an interim dividend of 2.10p, up 27 per cent over last year, said the outlook is positive with expected growth in the construction market likely to reach 10 per cent in 1998, and the Irish economy expected to remain strong.

Abbey doubles profit

ABBEY, the Irish housebuilder, more than doubled pre-tax profit from Ir£3.56 million (£3 million) to Ir£7.56 million in the half year to October 31. Earnings per share increased to 13.08p (6.16p), from which comes an interim dividend of 3p, a rise of 36 per cent. Housebuilding sales rose, with 378 completed sales and a turnover of Ir£32.75 million generating an operating profit of Ir£5.91 million. M&J Engineers, the company's plant hire business, reported an operating profit of Ir£855,000 on turnover of Ir£6.71 million.

Cobham acquisitions

COBHAM, the defence group, has acquired Nural Technologies for £3.4 million cash and certain microwave product lines of Premier Microwave Corporation for £1.1 million cash. The manufacture of these products, together with existing customer contracts worth £1.5 million, will be transferred to the group's Chelton Communication Systems. Last month, Chelton acquired Nural as well as Premier Microwave's business in passive microwave components. It said that the necessary regulatory approvals had been obtained.

Babcock wins contract

BABCOCK INTERNATIONAL has won a contract worth more than £30 million to refit HMS Southampton, the type 42 destroyer. The company said work would start at Rosyth on Monday and last until spring 1999. Up to 450 people will be employed during the refit, which will include the maintenance, overhaul and repair of the ship's hull and all main systems and equipment. Also included in the package are enhancements and updates to weapons, communications and command and control systems.

Unisys and PCs

UNISYS, the US technology group, is to discontinue the manufacture of personal computers and will source them from other manufacturers. This move will cost the group \$125 million (£77.5 million). The company is also going to write off the goodwill from the mergers of Sperry and Burroughs, which created Unisys in 1986.

AT&T set to acquire Teleport

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

AT&T, the largest US phone group, is expected to announce the acquisition of Teleport, a regional phone company, for \$11 billion (£6.5 billion).

The deal is said to be scheduled for announcement today after an AT&T board meeting yesterday. Teleport and AT&T declined to confirm reports of the acquisition.

A Teleport takeover had been rumoured for weeks and its share price soared 20 per cent. The reported \$50 per share that AT&T will pay for Teleport is 7 per cent below Wednesday's close. Analysts have called the deal a "take-under".

The acquisition will be driven by the ambition of all long-distance carriers to enter the regional phone market. Teleport serves business customers in 28 US states. This leaves AT&T still looking for a regional acquisition to get into the household market. The long-distance carriers were permitted to enter regional markets by the 1996 Telecommunications Act but the regional companies are still fighting legal battles to enter the long-distance market.

Peregrine stake at a discount

BY RICHARD MILLS BANKING CORRESPONDENT

PEREGRINE, the Hong Kong investment bank, is today expected to disclose that it is selling shares once worth \$200 million (£123 million) to Zurich Group, the Swiss financial services group, at a significant discount.

Trading in Peregrine shares has been suspended since Wednesday afternoon, when the investment bank announced that it was discussing a revision of the original terms of the share sale with Zurich.

Shares in the bank lost 14 per cent of their value before suspension, accentuating a decline in the stock's price since mid-1997.

Its shares dropped sharply in the autumn on talk — that was fiercely denied — that it had suffered heavy losses when the Hang Seng went into reverse.

Peregrine cited the continued drop in South-East Asian currencies and the recent downgrading of the credit ratings of Indonesian and South Korean companies as the main reasons behind the latest price cut.

Anglo American faces legal fight in Zairean copper row

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN JOHANNESBURG

ANGLO AMERICAN CORP, the South Africa mining giant, is denying charges that it conspired against a US rival's bid for copper riches in the former Zaire.

America Mineral Fields filed a \$3 billion (£1.84 billion) suit in a Texas court earlier this week alleging that Anglo had interfered with the company's agreements in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Anglo yesterday denied any allegations of wrongdoing.

The legal battle erupted barely a week after President Kabila of the Congo and Gecamines, the state mining agency, cancelled a tender for the Kolwezi project in Katanga province. This would have

reclaimed valuable minerals from previously mined waste. AMF, based in Arkansas, said: "America Mineral Fields believes that Anglo American has for some time orchestrated a well-financed campaign to interfere with the company projects."

One mining analyst said: "I don't see how legal proceedings filed in Texas can affect a company with no operations in the United States."

The Kolwezi mine workings hold about 1.44 million tonnes of copper and 275,000 tonnes of cobalt worth about \$10 billion. In the final days of the civil war in Zaire, foreign mine concerns rushed to secure deals with Mr Kabila's

fighters. The former Zaire was one of the world's top copper-cobalt producers, with annual production as high as 475,000 tonnes of copper and 17,000 tonnes of cobalt in the Eighties. But under the rule of Mobutu Sese Seko mine output fell to between 10 and 20 per cent of former levels.

Jean-Raymond Bouille, AMF's co-founder, signed a \$1 billion deal with the rebels last April to buy the "tailings" project, beating several South African competitors, including Anglo American, Gencor and Iscor.

At the time, Anglo American complained that the tender process had not been allowed to run its course.

Subsequent talks between AMF and Mr Kabila's Government to ratify the deal dragged on for months, fueling gossip that the company was losing its grip on the site.

Last week, Gecamines cancelled the tender, saying that the Government had exposed substantial up-front payments. Analysts speculated that the cash-strapped Congo Government had ended the process in hopes of getting a better deal.

Several leading mining companies, including Billiton and JCI said this week they remained interested in the tailings project. But Anglo American said it did not intend to submit a bid.

Table with columns: TOURIST RATES, Bank Buy, Bank Sell. Lists rates for various countries like Australia, Austria, Belgium, etc.

Advertisement for BrainPower. Includes text: 'MIND YOUR HEAD.', 'BrainPower. The six-part guide to unlocking your mind's full potential.', and 'Collect part one free with this week's Sunday Times.'

Advertisement for Allied Te possible and Majestic Win with Christ. Includes text: 'Allied Te possible', 'Majestic Win with Christ', and 'THE SUNDAY TIMES'.

Handwritten text in Arabic script: 'مكتبة القرآن'

The material girl grows up



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

The members of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee should be applauded for their restraint. No matter how much it disappointed some currency speculators, their decision to leave interest rates untouched was the right one. In fact, it was so clearly correct that it is hard to imagine how they all filled the hours during which they were supposed to be debating the issue of whether or not to use the single power in their possession.

Perhaps they passed the time swapping notes on the Christmas presents they gave and received. This might have provided entertaining anecdotal evidence of the indulgences of an elite bunch of economists but could hardly have been relied upon as a guide to the nation's spending patterns.

This more prosaic picture came from the CBI yesterday and it demonstrated just why there is no need for the MPC to slap on an extra quarter per cent to quell a spending surge. The bullish headlines from the CBI's survey of retailers were rapidly belied by a glimpse below the surface. While 54 per cent of respondents reported sales last month up on December 1996, 19 per cent reported a downturn.

In the way that statisticians view these things, that leaves a positive balance of 35 per cent. Pessimists would also discern that it leaves 27 per cent confessing that December sales

were static. Companies that have so far chosen to come forward and offer the City a glimpse of their Christmas trading results have been drawn from the happy 54 per cent, although the rich variety of bases on which their boasts rest make comparisons not only odious but impossible. Yesterday's crop of trading statements covered periods ranging from 48 weeks, at JJB Sports, to 5 weeks at TJ Hughes.

All, however, were reporting significant sales gains. We have yet to hear from the static 27 per cent, let alone the negative 19 per cent. Next week some of them may step forward.

The January sales appear to be bringing bumper business to some stores, but analysts suspect that this may only enforce the December results, with the gap between winners and losers widening. They are wary of Argos, seemingly squeezed by a revitalised Woolworths at the toy end of its business, and a revitalised Signet at the jewellery counters. And they tend towards weepiness at the mere mention of Laura Ashley. Although the share price indicates that investors believe House of Fraser enjoyed a good

Christmas, an unseemly rush to unfestive discounting before the holiday has raised some doubts. Customers are being cautious, not demonstrating the level of extravagance which would have justified action from the MPC. It is not the end of the material girl but, perhaps, her elevation to sensible adulthood. Retailers have to learn to offer her value. And, for the time being, the MPC has to continue to practice self-restraint.

Smog from IMF chokes Indonesia

Like a bush fire generating its own winds, the Asian currency collapse is moving about erratically, erupting first in one country, then another, leaving burned markets and charred economies in its wake. As the panic of autumn regains strength in the new year, the International Monetary

Fund itself has now emerged as the most worrying participant in this conflagration.

Instead of acting like a central bank, helping to calm short-term hysteria, the increasingly pyromaniac institution has become an agent of instability. Its officials are handing extra supplies of matches to speculators, instead of helping to turn the water cannon on them.

This week's chosen victim for global humiliation is Indonesia. During decades of profitable expansion there, the West found it convenient to ignore the sheer unpleasantness of Indonesia's Government. Suddenly Washington, long defender of the politically indefensible, has become a nipping financial prosecutor.

The rupiah has lost three quarters of its value on the foreign exchanges since July, accelerating downhill crazily this week. Stock prices have melted down and citizens are stripping

the shelves of Jakarta supermarkets of staples and of imports for fear of total collapse.

At this point, leaks from the IMF make it clear that officials are dissatisfied with the budget presented by ageing President Suharto and may not release the next tranche of Indonesia's borrowing facility. The budget does not appear to guarantee the surplus of 1 per cent of national income that the IMF now prescribes as the cure for recession; nor is the notorious Indonesian establishment keen enough to bankrupt banks and companies that have lost so heavily because of the rupiah's speculative devaluation.

Both South Korea and Thailand are now trying to renegotiate the IMF loan agreements they signed in extremis. As recent heavy sales of "red chips" suggest, it seems just as likely that the bush fires will at last attack China via Hong Kong. Even without this, the IMF's

triumphalist strategy is beginning to singe its own authors. But that is actually the most helpful sign. The US Federal Reserve is already inclined to shelve intended interest rate rises because of the impact of emerging Asia's woes. The whiff of deflation is spreading West. The sooner and more positively the West responds, the better.

Books show way for pills and potions

Can it be less than a decade since the battle of the Net Book Agreement erupted? Today, titles are routinely sold at discounted prices and yet the publishing industry has not been forced to restrict itself to the disheartening business of disseminating the works of Dame Barbara Cartland and Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare. Despite the terrifying warnings from the voices of vested interest, the abolition of the anachronistic NBA did not carry a death sentence for good literature or special interest tomes.

Although it was only last March that the Restrictive Practices Court finally outlawed the price-fixing agreement, it had

disintegrated long before that as Terry Maher's ill-fated Pentos, later joined by Asda, bravely encouraged others to defy the publishers' outdated efforts at dictatorship. Archie Norman knows how to strike the right populist note for a supermarket, even if he is still struggling to find a voter-friendly tone for the Tories. Standing up for the customer against the might of the pharmaceutical giants is a winner. Now that the Office of Fair Trading has launched proceedings in the Restrictive Practices Court to outlaw resale price maintenance on over-the-counter drugs, Archie is heading for another victory.

Manufacturers of pills and potions do not need the protection of price fixing, and those who buy them certainly do not need to shell out what Asda estimates is an extra £300 million a year because of RPM.

GEC shrinks again

ANOTHER day, another GEC disposal, this time grossing £100 million for some distribution businesses in English-speaking markets and not quite in the GEC-Alstom league. There is still no sign of the positive counterpart to this strategy, still less of the streetwise opportunism that deserted GEC in Lord Weinstock's later years. Perhaps action is being delayed because Lord Simpson has yet to impress investors or win their confidence.



Sweet smell of success: Philip Newton saw Perfume Shop sales rise 20 per cent over the last quarter of the year.

Shoppers opt for top end of market

By FRASER NELSON AND JENNIFER HANAWALD

UPMARKET stores were emerging as the victors of the Christmas shopping season yesterday as two retail chains gave evidence that customers are "trading up" by saving money for expensive goods.

Signet, the jewellery chain, and Merchant Retail, the perfume and department stores group, returned strong like-for-like Christmas sales growth yesterday - after a slow start to December gave way to a last-minute rush.

Shares of Signet made their sharpest one-day rise for over a year yesterday after the H Samuel's to Ernest Jones group said that US profits would overcome a lacklustre performance from H Samuel. James McAdam, chief executive, said the top end of the jewellery market was proving more lucrative than the H Samuel end - with Ernest

Late spree adds to JJB advance

By FRASER NELSON

THERE was a sharp slowdown in the demand for sportswear in the week before Christmas, before an end-of-year rush that left the sector sharply ahead over 1997, according to JJB Sports.

The company said that its like-for-like sales grew 7.5 per cent in the last six weeks of 1997, against the 14 per cent growth achieved throughout the rest of the year.

The figures came as Hi-Tec Sports, the quoted sports shoes company, reported a 32 per cent jump in interim profits, making £1.21 million in the six months to October 31. JJB shares fell 12½p to 667½p yesterday - having risen by 36p the day before - as some analysts felt disappointed with the profit margin lost by discounting to combat the fall in sales immediately

Public Notice

Issued by National Savings on behalf of HM Treasury

Interest Rate Changes

PENSIONERS BONDS

Series 3 Pensioners Bonds were withdrawn from sale on 8 January 1998. Series 4 will go on sale on 9 January. It will offer a guaranteed rate of 6.5% pa gross for the first five years held.

SAVINGS CERTIFICATES

National Savings Certificates of the 44th Issue and 11th Index-linked Issue were withdrawn from sale on 8 January 1998.

Fixed Interest Certificates

The 45th Issue will go on sale on 9 January. It will offer a guaranteed and tax-free return of 5.0% pa compound when held for five years.

Index-linked Certificates

The 12th Index-linked Issue will go on sale on 9 January. It will offer a guaranteed and tax-free return of 2.5% pa compound in addition to index-linking when held for five years.

CAPITAL BONDS

Series J Capital Bonds were withdrawn from sale on 8 January 1998. Series K will go on sale on 9 January. It will offer a gross return of 6.25% pa compound, guaranteed when held for five years.

CHILDREN'S BONUS BONDS

Issue H Children's Bonus Bonds were withdrawn from sale on 8 January 1998. Issue I will go on sale on 9 January. It will offer a guaranteed and tax-free return of 6.25% pa compound when held for the first five years.

INCOME BONDS

(previously announced 27 November 1997)
From 8 January 1998, the variable gross rates of interest have been increased from 6.75% pa to 7.0% pa on a holding up to £25,000 and from 7.0% pa to 7.25% pa on a holding of £25,000 or more.

Allied Textiles receives possible buyout offer

By CHRIS AVRES

THE Stock Exchange is to look at share price movements in Allied Textiles, the clothing to airbags company that was yesterday said that it was considering a possible management buyout offer.

John Carrin and Gerald Wightman, chief executive and finance director of Allied, are understood to be heading the buyout team, likely to be financed by Citicorp, the venture capitalist.

The takeover talks come only weeks after Allied's directors were fiercely criticised over the discovery of accounting irregularities at one of its sites. Allied, which yesterday said that it was "shocked, saddened and embarrassed" by the discovery,

saw its shares plunge 46p to 124p after the irregularities were revealed.

Yesterday, shares in Allied recovered all their ground, jumping 41½p to 165½p after the bid talks were disclosed. The Stock Exchange is known always to investigate such big share price movements, although it will not name individual companies.

Allied's chairman, Peter Honeysett, was unavailable for comment last night, although a company statement said: "Following initial discussions with the potential offeror, any such offer, if made, will require the involvement of certain of the executive directors. The board has,

therefore, appointed a committee comprising the independent directors of the company to consider any such offer, if made."

Allied has indicated that no police investigation is likely to be made into the accounting irregularities, and says that the managers responsible made no personal gain. The managers have not been named, although two of the four are still understood to be on Allied's staff.

Yesterday's statement also answered criticism by institutional shareholders who have claimed that Allied did not have an audit committee when the accounting problems occurred. It said: "The whole board

has always been and remains committed to the principles of corporate governance, that we do have an audit committee, which comprises the whole board, and that a detailed risk analysis had been carried out in normal course to establish the adequacy of our internal systems."

Allied also reported a 2.5 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for the year to September 30, from £16 million to £16.3 million, on turnover of £232 million, up 2 per cent from £227 million. Earnings per share rose 2 per cent, from 16.3p to 16.5p. A total dividend of 8.45p, up from 7.8p, will be paid.

Tempus, page 28

Majestic Wine sparkles with Christmas sales

By CHRIS AVRES

JOHN APTHORP, the tycoon who gave up his frozen dinners empire to sell champagne and fine wines, yesterday added an extra £2 million to the £22 million profit he has already made since floating Majestic Wine 14 months ago.

Shares in the wine warehouse company, 70 per cent of which are controlled by Mr Apthorp, rose 20p to 421½p after it said that Christmas drinking had lifted like-for-like sales 11 per cent during November and December.

Investors have been delighted by Majestic, which has become one of the Alternative Investment Market's best-performing stocks since floating at only 160p in November 1996. Majestic's sales have recently been boosted by the purchase of claret from Sweden's former state-owned drinks wholesaler.

Mr Apthorp, now 62, moved into the wine business as a retirement project after meeting Tony Mason, who joined Majestic as a director shortly



Tim How saw Majestic Wine's sales rise 11 per cent

after it was founded in 1980 in Wood Green, London.

Mr Mason left Majestic in the mid-eighties after seeing it make a disastrous expansion into the US. He then founded his own company, Wizard Wines, which was bought in 1987 by Bejan, the frozen food group owned by Mr Apthorp.

Two years later, Bejan was sold to Iceland, with Mr Apthorp, who made £60 million from the deal, keeping the wine division with Mr Mason.

In 1991 they bought Majestic, which had become a troubled business controlled by venture capitalists. The £25 million deal was backed by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the investment bank, with Mr Apthorp becoming chairman and Mr Mason head wine buyer. They appointed Tim How, a former Bejan employee, as chief executive.

Majestic has 69 stores and plans to open another 61 at a rate of eight a year.

LucasVarity buys brakes company

By CHRIS AVRES

LUCASVARITY has paid £70.6 million for the 66 per cent of voting shares not already owned in Freios Varga, South America's largest brakes manufacturer. Shares in Lucas rose 6½p to 215½p in response.

Sales at Freios Varga for the nine months ended September 30, 1997, were £149 million with pre-tax profits of £10.7 million. Net assets were £62.6 million.

Freios Varga has been a joint venture partner of Lucas Industries since 1969. It produces light and heavy vehicle brake components, including ABS, calipers, rotors, drum brakes, corner modules, boosters and brake fluid, has 2,500 employees and manufacturing plants and technical centres in Brazil, Argentina and the US.

Victor Rice, chief executive of LucasVarity, said: "We are delighted with this acquisition. Through it we have secured a strong position in a significant growth market. The acquisition fits excellently with our strategy."



Expect stability despite recent turmoil in Asia

The new year is only a week old, but already it has provided plenty of drama. Yet, despite the sensational events in Asia in the past few weeks, the biggest surprise of 1998 could be the stability of most economies and financial markets.

While events in Korea, Indonesia and Malaysia swing from tragedy to farce and back again with bewildering speed, the really important tragedy-comedy is being played out in Japan. Its \$4.6 trillion (£2.8 trillion) economy produces twice as much wealth as China, Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Taiwan combined.

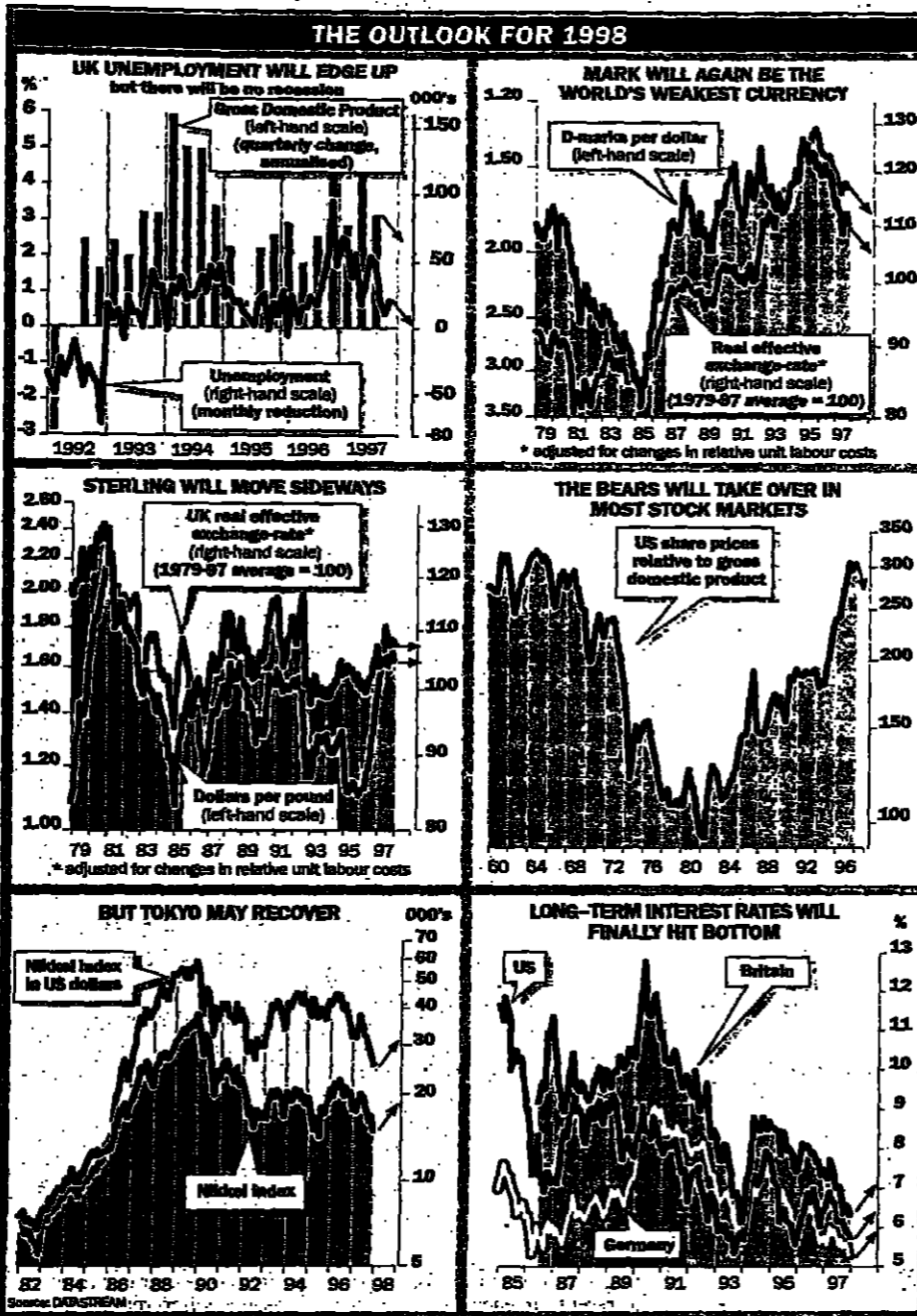
If Japan contributes to a solution of the Asian crisis — and here I come to the predictions I usually offer at this time of year — then 1998 could prove to be a surprisingly benign year for the world economy, despite the rocky start. If, on the other hand, Japan turns out to be part of the Asian problem, instead of part of the solution, then 1998 will be a year of hair-raising instability for financial markets and of serious economic dislocations around the globe.

With the stakes so high — and the American Administration now seemingly exerting strong pressure on the Japanese Government to come to its senses, the more likely outcome must surely be the benign one. At some point this year, Japan will vigorously reflate its economy. This will help to avert a 1930s-style depression across Asia and allow the rest of the world to enjoy another year of steady, if slightly disappointing, growth. The main question, however, is whether Japan will act quickly enough to prevent a banking crisis of monumental proportions, which would lead to huge currency misalignments, outbreaks of protectionism and abandoned investment projects, forcing the central banks of America and Europe to cut interest rates sharply in the year ahead.

Ryutaro Hashimoto, Japan's Prime Minister, seemed intent on becoming his country's Herbert Hoover; he now seems to have undergone a change of heart. According to observers such as Richard Medley, the Washington economic consultant known for his close links with policymakers in Tokyo, Mr Hashimoto is on the point of creating a consensus in the Liberal Democratic Party and the Ministry of Finance in support of a huge package of tax cuts and public works projects worth about ¥10 trillion (equivalent to \$80 billion or 1.5 per cent of Japan's GDP). This would come on top of the small temporary tax cut, worth only ¥2 trillion announced before Christmas.

I am no expert on the byzantine intricacies of Japanese politics, but it does seem probable that the advocates of fiscal stimulus will eventually get their way — if only because the catastrophic consequences of pre-Keynesian fiscal conservatism have now become so obvious to the Japanese people, while Korea has presented an

Japan will reflate its economy, a Wall Street fall will take global shares down and sterling will hold its own



object lesson of how quickly and comprehensively a miracle economy can crumble to dust. My first prediction for 1998, therefore, is that a big Keynesian package in Japan will revive its economy by the summer and will offset the global impact of the recession that is now inevitable in the rest of Asia. If I am right about this, the main surprises for other economies are likely to be in the direction of slightly stronger than expected growth.

In Britain and America growth will decelerate, but not by as much as most economists are now predicting. Consumer and business confidence remain high enough and international competitiveness remains strong enough to keep both countries on a satisfactory path of self-sustaining steady growth. In Europe, by contrast, the outlook is cloudier. Germany, in particular, will continue to suffer from uncompetitive labour costs and low consumer confidence. Its economy is too dependent on exports, especially of capital goods.

These will be hard hit by collapsing investment in Asia and also in Eastern Europe, which will suffer from cut-price Asian competition as well as financial anxieties. While Europe will certainly continue to recover, Germany may not enjoy the acceleration from 2.4 per cent to 3 per cent growth predicted by the OECD.

Turning to Britain, the OECD predicted in December, before the Korean meltdown, that Britain's GDP growth would decelerate from 3.4 per cent in 1997 to 2.2 per cent in 1998 in response to higher interest rates and the strong pound. I suspect that growth will be at least as strong as this and perhaps even a bit stronger, despite the problems in Asia. Nevertheless the slowdown — whether it is 2.2 per cent or 2.5 per cent growth — should be sufficient to dissuade the Bank of England from raising British interest rates any further.

will be a modest rise in unemployment. With the strong pound maintaining the pressure on British companies to raise their productivity, I suspect that unemployment will rise as soon as the economy decelerates below 2.5 per cent growth. The first increase in monthly unemployment will cause big political problems for Labour and for Gordon Brown in particular, but it will also ensure that inflation remains under control. However, with the economy showing no sign of recession and global activity accelerating as the year proceeds, the Bank is unlikely to start cutting interest rates in the second half of the year as the markets are currently expecting. In fact, 1998 could be one of those rare years when British interest rates move neither up nor down — and if they do move, it is very unlikely to be by more than half a percentage point in either direction.

How would this neutral outlook for interest rates affect the pound? The present consensus on sterling is (as usual) bearish, but I suspect that the pound will be a modest rise in unemployment. With the strong pound maintaining the pressure on British companies to raise their productivity, I suspect that unemployment will rise as soon as the economy decelerates below 2.5 per cent growth. The first increase in monthly unemployment will cause big political problems for Labour and for Gordon Brown in particular, but it will also ensure that inflation remains under control. However, with the economy showing no sign of recession and global activity accelerating as the year proceeds, the Bank is unlikely to start cutting interest rates in the second half of the year as the markets are currently expecting. In fact, 1998 could be one of those rare years when British interest rates move neither up nor down — and if they do move, it is very unlikely to be by more than half a percentage point in either direction.

with most analysts predicting a depreciation to below DM2.70 by the end of the year. This bearishness may not prove as wrong as it has in the past two years, but I suspect that sterling will not weaken at all, at least against the German mark, since British growth and interest rates will prove slightly stronger than expected, while Europe is likely to disappoint the very optimistic expectations that have become prevalent. On balance, sterling should trade throughout the year in a fairly narrow band, perhaps rising just a little above DM3.

Contrary to the market view, a moderately weak mark would provide the best possible launching pad for the launch of EMU. Not only would it help to maintain economic growth throughout Europe, it would also ensure the competitiveness of the newly created euro and allow it to hold its own or even appreciate gently against the dollar after January 1999. To create these conditions, I would expect the dollar to rise by a further 10 per cent against the mark to about DM2. Whether the dollar or the yen will end up as the world's strongest currency in 1998 will depend on the strength of the Japanese recovery measures. My suspicion is that the yen will end up on top, in part because the present market consensus is so overwhelmingly bearish about Japan.

Turning to stock markets (which I hope to discuss in greater detail later this month), Asia again looms large. Wall Street is now clearly at an extreme valuation — a statement that could not validly be made until the middle of 1997. This means that present share prices can only be sustained by one of two factors — hopes of continuing rapid profit growth or expectations of lower interest rates. Both of these hopes are likely to be shattered in the months ahead: Asian competition will hit profits, while Japan's expansionary measures will obviate the hoped-for reduction in US interest rates. As it becomes clear that the world is not about to slide into deflation, the overextended global bull market in bonds is also likely to come to an end.

The upshot is likely to be a substantial, though not catastrophic, fall in equities, with prices ending the year 20 or 30 per cent below the present level. If Wall Street falls, every European market (including London) will fall with it. The one exception will be Tokyo, which has always followed its own independent path. If I am right about a U-turn in Japanese economic policy, Tokyo shares should prove the year's best investment. Unfortunately they will be the worst possible investment if my hunch about Japanese policy turns out to be wrong.

Invasion of the real estate investment trusts is under way

Turnberry, the Open Championship venue on the east coast of Scotland, has witnessed some of the world's classic golf matches. But on Christmas Eve it became the starting point for what is expected to turn into an invasion by the America's biggest real estate investment trusts.

Dominic Walsh looks at the US phenomenon that is changing the face of the hotels sector

While one such real estate investment trust (Reit), Starwood Lodging, was surprising the business world with its \$4.4 billion (£2.6 billion) acquisition of ITT Corporation, Starwood, the company, quietly put out an announcement from its Phoenix headquarters to the effect that it had bought the five-star Turnberry Hotel and golf courses for around \$51.5 million.

Christmas was also an unseasonably busy time for Patriot American Hospitality, based in Dallas, as it stepped up its efforts to finalise the acquisition of Arcadian International, the Surrey hotel operator and developer capitalised at less than £90 million. An announcement is expected in the next couple of weeks.

Although neither deal is massive, the significance lies in the huge amounts of cash both Starwood and Patriot have been throwing at the US hotel industry. Starwood's acquisition of ITT, owner of the Sheraton chain, is expected to be completed next month and follows its takeover of Westin Hotels & Resorts for \$1.8 billion. Virtually overnight, Starwood has become one of the world's biggest hotel proprietors.

Patriot, meanwhile, has forked out \$2.1 billion for Interstate Hotels and a further \$1.1 billion for Wyndham Hotel Corporation, taking its total spending on recent deals to almost \$5 billion. And in the last few days, Meditrust, a Reit that has become the largest operator of healthcare properties in the US, unveiled a \$3 billion move into hotels with the acquisition of La Quinta Inns, based in Texas.

The impetus for these deals has been driven not just by the strong rebound in the US lodging industry but by a renewed surge of interest in Reits, whose trust status was brought in to revive the moribund property sector in the early 1980s. This allows them to avoid paying any corporate tax provided they return at least 95 per cent of their otherwise taxable income to shareholders in the form of dividends. Moreover, a handful of the trusts, including Starwood, Patriot and Meditrust, have been able to benefit from a tax

loophole (long-since closed) allowing them to set up two companies — one to own the properties and the other to operate them — with their stock trading in tandem.

Normal Reits are allowed to collect only rents or mortgage payments, whereas these so-called "paired-share" Reits can also pass the profits from their operating companies back to the trust, thereby avoiding a second lot of corporate tax.

Benny Sternlicht, who set up Starwood in 1994, has used this antiquated tax regime to such effect that by last year the group's shares had more than tripled. It was this combination of favourable tax status and booming share price that enabled Mr Sternlicht to outbid the formidable Steve Bollenbach, of Hilton Hotels Corporation, for ITT.

Stephen Patel, an international hotel specialist with Knight Frank, the property agent, said the speed of the deals suggested that the Reits were snapping up as many hotel groups as possible in anticipation of Congress closing the tax loophole. "My understanding of Starwood is that they're opportunistic. They have no specific strategy, but just react to opportunities as they come up."

It is no surprise that Starwood, Patriot and Meditrust have all started looking to Europe, where the consolidation of the hotel industry is in its infancy.

Marten Foxon, who resigned last month as Forte Hotels property director after overseeing the Exclusive Hotels sale process, said: "It was inevitable that the Reits would sniff at Europe, but I doubt we'll see the mega deals seen in the States because there isn't really a mega deal to be done."

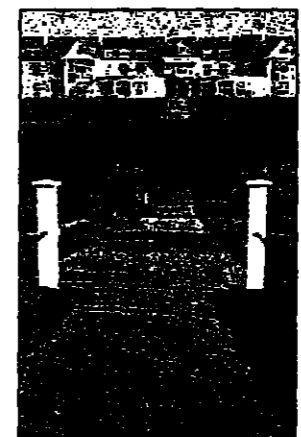
The Arcadian deal would appear to support this theory, because the Surrey group has a clutch of mainly country house hotels of little apparent consequence to a US group the size of Patriot. But the jewel in its crown is Malmaison Hotels, a joint venture in which Arcadian has a 34 per cent stake, the remainder being controlled by Ken McCulloch, the Glasgow entrepreneur; Bots & Company, the investment boutique; and Mick Hucknall, the pop singer.

The Times understands that Patriot plans to invest at least £200 million in an initial roll-out of the Malmaison concept in major European cities. If successful it may be developed on a wider scale. It has hotels open or under development in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Manchester and Leeds, and is close to securing sites in London, Paris and Amsterdam.

Similarly, Starwood appears to be focusing on individual properties. In addition to Turnberry, it is involved in a £125 million hotel development planned for Bloomsbury Square, London, by Blackfriars Investments. Starwood is thought to be an investor in the scheme and its Westin chain has won the management contract to operate the five-star hotel. It is also looking to add another 10-15 upmarket Sheraton hotels to its current total of six and has declared an interest in bringing its three-star Four Points brand to the UK.

Of the bigger companies, the most obvious takeover candidate is Thistle Hotels, whose chief executive, Robert Peel, was forced out recently by Brierley Investments, its main shareholder.

But the Reits are unlikely to have it all their own way. Arne Sorenson, senior vice-president, business development, for Marriott International, said: "There will be continuing consolidation and we will participate in it." And it is unlikely to be long before Mr Bollenbach acts to stem Hilton's poor share performance since it last out on ITT. If he does, a full merger with its UK partner, Ladbrokes, which owns Hilton International, could be back on the agenda.



Turnberry purchase cost \$51.5 million

Numbers up

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT spokesmen are not normally the sort to make Government ministers tremble at the despatch box. But Malcolm Bruce, Treasury spokesman, has been scoring some notable Except hits on Gordon Brown, most recently on the matter of individual savings accounts, or less, claiming to have forced the Treasury to admit that these will increase taxes.

Bruce, if you recall, revealed soon after the Budget a £5 billion "black hole" in the Treasury finances. Gordon Brown has accused him of being "economically illiterate".



I bet Michael Fish didn't predict that one either

Tony Blair says a Teletubby could do his job better — so he must know what he is doing. His secret weapon is David Laws, a 31-year-old economist who made his pile at BZW overseeing interest rate trading. Laws has shown a singular ability to worm numbers out of the available government sources. The trick, he says, is effective use of the House of Commons library. In the case of Isas, the library asked the Treasury if they would mean higher taxes. The Treasury, which would probably have smelled a rat if the request came from an Opposition MP, admitted it to the library. "We were able to demonstrate that the Treasury was saying one thing in one place and another in another."

CONGRATULATIONS to Jeremy Duckworth at UBS, who is celebrating the arrival of his first-born, a son born just before the new year. Duckworth is a director in corporate finance with a special responsibility for media and entertainment. So it is entirely appropriate that he should have chosen the name Jack. After the usual pleasantries — "Who told you? If it's Anthony Fry I'll kill him" — he admits that, indeed, his offspring is



the namesake of one of the country's more risible soap opera characters. "He's not wearing glasses with Elastoplast yet," says Duckworth. "I actually rather like the name."

Clean bill THE Department of Health, as part of a new initiative on prescription charge fraud, is looking for a "fraud supremo" — their wording, and at least they didn't call it a fraud czar. Alas, the sad death last year of Mother Theresa would seem to have robbed them of their only realistic candidate. The advertisement is full of the usual stuff about experience of "IT solutions to complex business problems", but

there are some peculiar extra qualifications needed. It must be someone "of substantial personal standing and stature". I can only assume this is some sort of coded reference meaning "someone without too many convictions for fraud", but who knows? The successful paragon of virtue gets a three-year contract and between £47,000 and £77,000. Non-smokers only.

AS BRITAIN takes over the EU presidency, I hear a long-running Anglo-French dispute has again failed to make it on to the agenda. The French are terribly upset because not a sou of the cash bet in Britain on big races in France makes its way to their own racing industry.

They have a draft directive in their favour, but they have yet to enforce it because of British stonewalling. I am glad to say. The sums involved are not small — £130 million bet here on French races last year. The French take over the presidency in the year 2000, when they might be able to do something about it.

Bank error ARTHUR LEVITT, chairman of the Securities & Exchange Commission, and Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve Chairman, have run into a little local difficulty. They are sup-

porting Jesse Jackson, the seasoned politician, who is calling for funds from Wall Street to boost the employment of minorities and women there, by agreeing to speak at a conference. This information was included in his fundraising literature. Alas, all was going well, and \$400,000 had been raised, when it occurred to Greenspan and Levitt that it was perhaps not such a good idea to be seen canvassing funds from companies they are supposed to regulate. Jackson was forced to send out a humiliating letter distancing the two from his fundraising. Somehow I feel it could never happen in London.

MARTIN WALLER



Jesse Jackson: calling on the great and the good

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CHANGING TIMES

Modest gains at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Company Name	Price	Change	Yield %	P/E Ratio
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES				
BANKS				
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST				
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS				
ENGINEERING VEHICLES				
FOOD MANUFACTURERS				
LEISURE & HOTELS				
MINING				
MEDIA				
PROPERTY				
RETAILERS, FOOD				
RETAILERS, GENERAL				
TELECOMMUNICATIONS				
TEXTILES & APPAREL				
TRANSPORT				
WATER				
ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET				
INDEX-LINKED				
SHORTS (under 5 years)				
LONGS (over 15 years)				
UNDATED				
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)				
INSURANCE				
INVESTMENT TRUSTS				
ENGINEERING				
CHEMICALS				
DISTRIBUTORS				
HOUSEHOLD GOODS				
HEALTHCARE				
ELECTRICITY				
ELECTRONIC & ELECT				
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SATURDAY

20P

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CHANGING TIMES

Spinnin
out of th
big top

CONCERTS:

Talent shows
its future colour

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So where did we leave the plot, before we broke for mince pies and turkey? As I recall, the arts were up Nightmare Alley without a wake-up call. The Arts Council had no chairman or secretary-general. Covent Garden had no board, MPs screamed of incompetence. Nearly everybody was broke.

Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, was proving to be as dynamic as a cream bun in a puddle. And the hives who venerated Labour so noisily last May were starting to curse the very water on which Tony Blair walked. "All that windy rhetoric!" they exclaimed. "Where's the action?"

Well, it seems that we are finally about to get some. But whether the hives will approve must be in doubt. An announcement about the new Arts Council chairman is imminent. And if what 97 people have told me in the past week is true, the big cheese being wooed is Gerry Robinson, the multimillionaire boss of the £8 billion Granada Group—and the star turn in some of the most vicious takeover battles of the past decade.

A dawn raid on the Arts Council?

Of course the appointment is not certain yet. But the very fact that he is top of Smith's wish-list says rather ominous things about Smith's view of the Arts Council. Indeed, the present delay appears to be merely a matter of finding a regular slot for arts work in Robinson's complicated life. He spends three days each week in his native Donegal. He chairs Granada and BSkyB. And he has ambitions to merge the entire ITV network, preferably under his own iron leadership. They do say that if you want something done you should ask a busy person, but there must be limits.

There must also be doubt about whether arts people—nearly all of them struggling to run their lives or companies on a shoestring and a prayer—can identify with an Arts Council chairman whose present salary is £857,000. By any definition Robinson is a fat cat, even if he did make a famous

conversion (and donation) to Labour before the election.

Why would Smith want to put a boardroom bruiser in charge of the Arts Council? I don't think Robinson is being recruited for his knowledge of the Renaissance madrigal. So let's look at his colourful career and make our own wild surmise.

One of his first acts at Granada was to remove David Plowright, the respected head of Granada TV, as part of a purge that saw creative types generally brought under the tight fist of accountants. Producers and celebrities were livid; indeed, John Cleese sent Robinson what is surely the most famous fax in broadcasting history: "F*** off out of it, you ignorant upstart caterer." It read, with Chaucerian elegance: "But Robinson didn't. Indeed he weathered the storm, just as he did the Labour campaign four years ago to strip Granada of its TV franchise because of job losses and



RICHARD MORRISON

alleged diminishing programme quality under Robinson's leadership. "This is a story of boardroom savagery, the like of which British TV has never seen," fumed Ann Clwyd, then Labour's heritage spokeswoman, to the Independent Television Commission.

Gosh, how times change! The "boardroom savage" is now courted by the very same Labour Party to run the Arts Council. The ninth son of an Irish carpenter, Robinson is said to be utterly charming when not concocting his dawn raids and hostile bids. But his arrival inside any organisation does tend to be rather like the entry of Arnold Schwarzenegger into a Hollywood plot: a signal for carnage to commence. True, many people feel that the Arts Council needs a good shake-up. Whether it needs to be purged, downsized, gutted, rationalised and hung out to dry is another matter.

He then hastened to reassure church leaders that the Millennium Experience would also be rich in spiritual nourishment.

You don't need to be Ludwig Wittgenstein to sense a certain logical incompatibility here. Mandelson is displaying the fatal "all things to all people" thinking that has dogged the dome from the start. The fact is that, with less than two years to go, the Green- wich team appears to have no fixed ideas about content, no chance of putting an effective transport infrastructure in place, and no one on board with experience of staging live entertainment on a mass scale. Even by the standards of British politics, this blind leap into the notoriously treacherous waters of showbiz must be judged an act of mind-blowing arrogance. And the one possible rescuer, Sir Cameron Mackintosh, severed his links with the dome last month.

Yet this week our newspapers

were full of normally sane chaps arguing that, since Mandelson is such a canny and confident political operator, he "won't allow the dome to fail". On Wednesday the Editor of *The Independent*, no less, declared that the dome "in the end will stand as an example of old-fashioned leadership, taking us into the 2000s in a thoughtful, well-intentioned and alert way".

Well, it's a fascinating point of view. The trouble is, assessing a project's chance of success solely by measuring the aura of bravado surrounding its launch is a notoriously inexact, not to say stupid, science. On that basis, the Scottish football team would reach every World Cup final, Neil Kinnock would have reached 10 Downing Street, and Richard Branson would have reached his balloon before it took off. There is a jolly interesting film on that sort of subject coming out this month. It's called *Titanic*. It reminds us that events have a way of conspiring to thwart grandiose projects that "won't be allowed to fail". And the Green- wich Dome, I fear, has nemesis written all over it.

Spinning out of the big top

If you still think of the big top in terms of elephants dolefully clutching each other's tails, or hyperactive midgets pouring water on one another's heads, you should promptly buy, taxid or pogostick your way to the Albert Hall and allow Cirque du Soleil to disabuse you.

This Canadian outfit offers not just a fresh style of circus, but an entire new-look world. The company trips, prances or rolls onstage in garb that variously makes its members look like silvery centaurs, tiny toy ballerinas, and crosses between purple cockerels and 18th-century beaux. You would not be the least surprised to learn that they had come by flying saucer to prove to us earthlings that, as far as imaginative dexterity and physical prowess go, their civilisation is far superior.

Maybe *Alegria* has not quite the lavish variety and visual strangeness of *Saltimbanco*, the show the Soleil folk first brought to London in 1996; but they still leave you feeling they were created by an alien process. You don't have to be a Frisbee tein through the air, or a rebel to turn a dozen times before landing, or a ghost to wear your head in your armpit. These creatures can do all that, thanks to joints that have presumably been put on the wrong way round and wings invisibly sprouting from their shoulderblades.

Anyway, contortionists give their imitations of spiders, crabs, chewing gum and mercury, and, in one case, do impossible things with hula hoops while upside-down and inside-out. Chunky figures bring mattresses onto the stage or clamber onto swings and proceed to flout the laws of gravity. One of the few Britons in the company, Paul Bowler, dives in and out of a spiralling steel-and-air cube, giving the impression of Leonardo's explanatory human caught in a geometric swirl of rainbow hues. A Hawaiian called Lisiate Tuione Tovo disdains merely to swallow flames, preferring to pick them up, shift them, and half-dance, half-bathe inside them.

Not everything astounds. The clowns could be funnier and less whimsical. Jokey items in which gormless men

Alegria
Albert Hall

pretend to be flies stuck in a web, or bid farewells to empty overcoats at railway stations, are unlikely to entrance veterans of the London Mime Festival.

Yet even relatively ordinary items take on a marvellous quality in Andrew Watson's production, subsumed as they are into a seamlessly exotic universe. These athletes and acrobats cannot even take a bow without suggesting they have ventured in from *2001: A Space Odyssey*, or out of one of the more arcane Greek myths, or both.

Add strange chants and weird tootles, a hovering pterodactyl, a dwarfish ringmaster with a hunch, a paunch and bright red tails, and spectral figures watching from above, and you have an evening that can be recommended almost as unreservedly as *Saltimbanco*. Once again Soleil has created an imaginative world that acknowledges tradition, reaches into the future, and is ceaselessly busy in the present. Once again it will keep your organs of wonder exercised: eyes, ears and, yes, the dreamy bits in between.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE
This review appeared in late editions of *The Times* yesterday



Cirque du Soleil's Hawaiian fire dancer, Lisiate Tuione Tovo, doesn't merely swallow flames, but half-bathes in them

Two's company, three's a mess

The Ice House
Glasgow

DOING things behind closed doors is an altogether English obsession, and one knows one should really get out more when domestic bliss turns into mutual abuse and you are one Martin short of ripping each other's hearts out. It's the thrill of the abuse that relieves the boredom, though, with the pleasure principle cancelling the moral standards of a wider world.

Robert David MacDonald invites us to join in such deliciously decadent pursuits in his new play for the Citizens' tiny and at times hot and bothersome Stalls Studio. Here all passion between

world view comes on strong with the point of view of a good old-fashioned sensualist. The clipped cut and thrust of Bryan and Heller's sparring cases into full-blown bisexual stalking as if *Entertaining Mr Sloane* had moved across town to hang out with the seemingly more civilised Hampstead set. There are plenty of other echoes: an unborn child called from *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, a master/servant/mistress power struggle from Pinter's *The Servant*. But who ends up on top here is an altogether messier affair, as all the

libertine ideals go belly-up into the realm of melodrama. It is all handsomely delivered on Kenny Miller's stark, virginal white set. Henry Ian Cusick's Rod is a dark and dangerous foil to Derwent Watson's Bryan and Andrea Hart's Heller. But in the end the play ends up a victim of its own cool restraint, its symbolism too deep, its philosophy too textbook. If *The Ice House* drew more of the blood it alluded to, it might have more of a grip on the heart and soul of matters. But that's not how we do things here, is it?

NEIL COOPER

CONCERTS: Guitars and flute lead the youth revolution; and an almost too-perfect baritone

Talent shows off its future colours

IT IS encouraging to observe that the talented young performers taking part in the PLC concerts on Wednesday night have already learnt the importance of making an impression on stage.

A male guitar duo (Mark Eden and Christopher Stell) appeared in smart-but-casual open-necked coloured shirts, while a female Norwegian flautist (Rebecca Larsen) made a striking entrance in diaphanous turquoise, continuing to hold the audience's attention with playing of extraordinary skill and subtlety.

In Simon Holt's *Maiistra* she was called on to bend notes, butter-tongued, even sing while playing. A switch from conventional flute to sensuous alto flute was covered adroitly with a few sung notes and she made a theatrical exit while still playing. Most important of all, she evoked the miracu-

PLC Young Artists
Purcell Room

lous song of the magic golden bird alluded to in the title: the virtuoso technique was never merely an end in itself. David Bedford's *Oh Eva Hear my Lament*, with unhelpfully written, gasp-inducing moto perpetuo and saccharine sub-Poulenc harmonies, was composed specially for Larsen. She deserved better, and got it with Elliott Carter's *Scrive in Venio* and Thea Musgrave's *Piccolo Play*, both brilliantly done, the latter with fine accompaniment from Juliet Edwards.

Eden and Stell played a taxing programme entirely from memory, impressing further with their meticulously

Polished to a gloss

precise ensemble in Stephen Dodgson's *Pastourelle* and admirable control of shades of pianissimo in Michael Ball's *Music for an Island*, ending with an outlandish repertoire of contemporary techniques in Roland Dyens's engaging *Côté Nord*.

There was delicacy too in the Emiro Ensemble's account of Benjamin Frankel's *Pezzi Pianissimi*, a wider range of colour, skilfully deployed, in three works by Diana Burrell—*Constellations I and II* and *Untitled Composition*—and finely graded playing in Ian Gardiner's resourceful Bass Clarinet Trio. The three players making up this slightly unusual combination demonstrated their exemplary ensemble in Piers Hellawell's *Truth or Consequences*, Sarah Miller's discreet, rippling clarinet arpeggios and Neil Roxburgh's well-integrated piano punctuation providing an ideal backdrop for the eloquently arching melody on Charlotte Eksteen's cello.

Thomas Hampson
Wigmore Hall

IF Thomas Hampson left a trail of disappointment when he cancelled his Wigmore Hall recital at the start of the week, no one could have felt let down by his *Winterreise* there on Wednesday. Not by its searing end, at least, in which one really identifies with the anguish of the lonely winter traveller denied the comfort of death; but at the start of Schubert's cycle the American baritone's singing had been just a little too manicured.

Indeed, what we got was almost two performances, one by Hampson the polished professional, one by Hampson the searching Lieder singer. Churlish though it may be to find his phrasing too perfect or his dark, nutty tone too even,

JOHN ALLISON

Thinking personalities

RADIO

Anyone would think that Nicholas Kenyon had joined the Save Radio 3 Campaign. The network's latest advertisement gives direct expression to the Controller's frustration over criticism that Radio 3 is apeing the high- lights style of Classic FM by using the phrase "including the famous bits".

References to the opposition, explicit or implicit, have a dubious history in advertising. On balance, though, there is probably some merit in R3 going on the offensive at a time when some are charging it with copying another Classic FM technique, the use of "personalities".

This is becoming just a tad silly. When Classic snatched Richard Baker from under the portals of Broadcasting House, the cry went up that BBC radio was standing on the precipice above hell itself and was about to be propelled over the edge by the gathering forces of modern commercial radio. Now Baker has returned to the BBC, the accusation is that the corporation is obsessed with personalities.

Both ways, you can't have it. In fact Baker and Joan Bakewell, the other big name recruited by Radio 3, both started new programmes on the network this week, and both have proven to be what everyone always knew them to be: consummate professionals to the manner born. Baker, incidentally, returned to Radio 4 a couple of weeks ago, and his ubiquity is further established by the fact that he will continue with some work for Classic FM.

Baker's new Radio 3 programme, *Sound Stories* (weekdays), has the ambitious aim of telling the stories behind one thousand years of music. It is not likely to light

any fires, but neither will it do anything to assist those who would paint Radio 3 as a network desperate for ratings. *Sound Stories* goes out on five days a week, and this week it is looking at the musical contribution of five religious institutions.

The opener on Monday was very strong: it told the story of J.S. Bach's years as Kantor at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, an interesting reminder that the propensity for temperamental displays by the big shots of music is by no means a modern phenomenon. Bach appears to have divided his time between writing huge amounts of music, complaining to the town council about staffing cuts and fathering 13 children.

Joan Bakewell is less familiar as a radio voice, but of course her arts broadcasting credentials go all the way back to BBC 2's *Late Night Line-Up* in the 1960s, when she was dubbed "the thinking man's crumpet". This colourful description is unlikely to be heard on the lips—unless they are curled—of anyone in the Save Radio 3 Campaign.

Bakewell introduces *Artist of the Week*, another new strand which also transmits every weekday; indeed it precedes *Sound Stories* in the schedule. In this first week the artist has been Dame Joan Sutherland. I have not been able to hear all the interviews, but on the evidence of the first two Bakewell's intellect and her known thoroughness in research will both strengthen and enrich the Radio 3 morning schedule.

PETER BARNARD

007

★★★★★ **BOND IS CATEGORICALLY BACK.**

Andrew Collins *EMPIRE*

"Pierce Brosnan is perfect... cracking sexual energy."

Roger Ebert *THE INDEPENDENT*

"Slicker, faster and funnier than any recent Hollywood product."

Neil Cooper *THE INDEPENDENT*

Tomorrow Never Dies

007

NOW SHOWING AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Rural hymns with verve



The belated British release of Whiskeytown's Strangers Almanac is good news for lovers of intelligent country-rock

LONDON

CHAMBER MUSIC: The eminent tenor Anthony Johnson joins the Nash Ensemble in a performance of Gurney's Ludlow and Teme and Vaughan Williams's On Wenlock Edge...

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargreaves

ELSEWHERE

BRISTOL: Michael Ratley returns to town for three nights only with the breathtakingly energetic Celtic dance show Lord of the Dance...

LONDON GALLERIES

British Museum: Carter 1800-1838 (011-323 6525). Design Museum: Corbin Foundation Collection (0171-747 9055)...

THEATRE GUIDE

Jersey Kingdon's assessment of theatre showing in London. House full, returns only, some seats available, S on sale at prices.

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and where to see them. Includes titles like 'The End of Violence' and 'The Jackal'.

NEW POP ALBUMS

WHISKEYTOWN: Strangers Almanac (Outpost Recordings OPD 30005 £15.99). RELEASED in America last July, Whiskeytown's second album is finally delivered...

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 (1) Urban Hymns... Verve (Hut)
2 (2) Spiceworld... Spice Girls (Virgin)
3 (3) All Saints... All Saints (London)
4 (4) White on Blonde... Texas (Mercury)
5 (5) Let's Talk About Love... Celine Dion (Epic)
6 (14) Life Through a Lens... Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
7 (11) Postcards from Heaven... Lighthouse Family (Wild Card)
8 (6) The Best of... Wham! (Epic)
9 (7) Greatest Hits... Elton (EMI)
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NEW JAZZ ALBUMS

CHARLES MINGUS: Passions of a Man: The Complete Atlantic Recordings 1956-61 (Rhino R2 72871, 6 CDs). THE late-1950s Atlantic recordings of Charles Mingus, which include four of his finest studio albums...

ART

RON COOK, Nigel Hawton and Malcolm Slom in the exceptionally revealing drama about the artist's unspoken resentment and an almost self-portrait.

THEATRE

THE CHAIRS: Richard Briers and Geraldine McEwan superb in Kenneth's comic portrait of a husband and wife. Simon MacIntyre directs for Comicollective, design by the Clay Bases.

THEATRE

THE WINTER GUEST (19): Duffell re-creation of Sheridan's play about a play about a cross-dressing lover in a Scottish coastal town.

THEATRE

STARSHIP TROOPERS (15): Household names battle alien invaders. Director, John Dahl.

THEATRE

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ART GALLERIES

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THEATRES

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ENTERTAINMENTS

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000. Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Phantom of the Opera.

THEATRES

CAMBRIDGE 04 500416 6000. 34 4444 420 000 (10 lines). 416 600454/455/456/457/458.

ENTERTAINMENTS

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000. Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Phantom of the Opera.

THEATRES

DUCHES BOUCC 24 hrs 0171 494 5000. 02 394 5383/4 444 444 444. 02 394 5383/4 444 444 444.

ENTERTAINMENTS

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000. Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Phantom of the Opera.

THEATRES

HER MAJESTY'S 24 hrs 0171 494 5000. 02 394 5383/4 444 444 444. 02 394 5383/4 444 444 444.

ENTERTAINMENTS

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000. Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Phantom of the Opera.

THEATRES

NATIONAL THEATRE 0171 837 0000. 02 746 0700. 02 746 0700. 02 746 0700.

ENTERTAINMENTS

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000. Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Phantom of the Opera.

THEATRES

PICCADILLY 0171 3740171. 34 4444 420 000 (24 lines). 02 394 5383/4 444 444 444.

ENTERTAINMENTS

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000. Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Phantom of the Opera.

THEATRES

VAUXHALL 0171 836 9987. 02 394 5383/4 444 444 444. 02 394 5383/4 444 444 444.

ENTERTAINMENTS

ALDWYCH 0171 416 6000. Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Phantom of the Opera.

Large advertisement for 'What do if p Rolling' featuring a woman's face and promotional text for a show.

Large advertisement for 'FINAL PERFORMANCES OF SELL OUT WEST END SHOW! - PRIOR TO WORLD TOUR' featuring 'FACED UP' and 'BUGSY'.

What do you do if papa is a Rolling Stone?

Some join the family business, alongside the offspring of The Who and Bob Dylan. Nigel Williamson reports

The names are familiar, but the faces are not. While Hollywood has long exploited the gene pool of family talent, the second-generation syndrome is far newer in the relatively youthful world of rock'n'roll. But now, as the 30th anniversary of the Woodstock Festival approaches — in August next year — and its survivors settle into middle age and older, the flow of aspiring young stars with pop icon parents is turning into something of a flood.

So far, though, the track record of rock's progeny suggests that pedigree is no guarantee of success. For every Jakob Dylan, whose band, the Wallflowers, is currently selling more records in America than his father Bob, there is a Julian Lennon, who has never quite succeeded in emerging from John's mighty shadow.

Unhappiest of all is the example of Jeff Buckley, son of the 1960s hippy troubadour Tim. Jeff's untimely death last year was a tragic repetition of history which saw the enormous talents of both father and son lost while both were still young men. Then there are the strangest and most unlikely lineages. Adam F, whose adventurous drum and bass album *Colours* was voted one of the best of 1997, by David Sinclair in these pages, just happens to be the son of the leather-clad 1970s popster, Alvin Stardust.

To these well-bred ranks we can shortly add Adam Cohen,

23, whose album could well be racked alongside his father's 1967 bedsit classic, *Songs of Leonard Cohen*, and Rufus Wainwright, signed to Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks label, who must live down having his babyhood musically celebrated in his father Loudon's infamous *Rufus is a Hit Man*. Others hoping that 1998 will see their offspring follow in their own illustrious musical footsteps include Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones, Richard Thompson

'I feel sorry for my Dad because he's never not been famous'

and Steven Stills, once of Buffalo Springfield and Crosby, Stills and Nash.

Ahead of them all in the fame queue, though, is Emma Townshend, the daughter of The Who's Pete, who this month releases the first single from her strikingly mature forthcoming debut album, *Winterland*. At 28 she has already made her own way in the world, turning down a record deal ten years ago to pursue an academic career.

"I feel sorry for my Dad in a

way because he's never not been famous," Townshend says. "He's never done an ordinary job in an ordinary office and been treated as an ordinary person. That's quite a loss. He can't just go into a shop and listen to other people's conversations, he's never had a private glimpse into other people's worlds because he's been a rock star since he was 18."

She denies that there is any burden in having a famous father, although she admits that some will attribute her recording deal with East West Records to nepotism. "There haven't been many people who have had to cope with it in rock yet. But people can appreciate Jamie Lee Curtis and Tony Curtis as completely different individuals in the movies. I'm happy to trade on the family name — I'm proud of it — and I know once people listen to my record they will forget about my Dad."

Townshend's piano-led songs recall the work of Tori Amos and Kate Bush rather than the rock that made her father famous, but inevitably her upbringing has exerted a strong influence. "Although my Dad never had copies of his records around the house and I am unfamiliar with a lot of his work, he would always come home and talk about the music business."

She is a fully paid-up member of the Istock generation, a graduate of the progressive school in West London to which many of the Woodstock



Yesterday, today and tomorrow? (Clockwise from bottom left) Julian Lennon's star waned, but Jakob Dylan's success can only inspire Emma Townshend

Sheepish in wolverine's clothing

Some days, you just get the feeling that all of rock history's intricate storylines could be found in a bumper book of fairytales. *Sleeping Beauty* — teenage girl stays in bedroom until woken by Kiss — echoes the life of many heavy metal fans in the Midlands. *Babes in the Wood* — kids suffer from hypothermia and exposure in Great Outdoors — sounds mightily like Woodstocks I and II.

And then there's *The Emperor's New Clothes*, wherein a regal personage has such a mighty PR team that no one realises that he is parading naked in the streets, save a small child who, presumably, doesn't read the tabloids. While there are embittered hordes who would claim that both the Spice Girls and Oasis are, metaphorically, walking around with their inadequate parts covered only by a hyper-bolic press release, there is another for whom *The Emperor's New Clothes* is a factual, blow-by-blow account of her career, but with one small twist.

That person is Louise, the

Caitlin Moran wonders why people fell for the notion of pop poppet

Louise as the queen of raunch'n'roll



Louise, cute as a bug's ear, and about as sexy

googly-eyed blonde faun who left Eternal to pursue a solo career, and the twist is that while every magazine and newspaper titillatingly declares her to be "Hot" and "Naked" on the cover, inside we find her admittedly stripped down to some "saucy"

those vibrating Ernie from *Sesame Street* dolls tucked into their pants.

The only glitter in Louise's eyes is from nerves, her hands are clenched and she walks like a 12-year-old in a school crocodile going to a swimming lesson. Her *Top of the Pops* performances are always a mortifying experience. Styled with all the delicacy of an Ann Summers mannequin, this polite-looking, unassuming girly girl tentatively runs through her dance routines. She touches her body with all the lasciviousness of someone pulling the bobby bits off a jumper, and grinds her hips like one of the Mini-Pops.

One horrible *Chart Show* experience had her in chains, with a studded collar around her neck. She looked like an adorable but bewildered collie puppy being sold into slavery. This isn't a diatribe against Louise herself — that would be like stamping on tiny baby pigeons — but against her stylists, management and "advisers", who have tried to emulate Kylie Minogue's career down to the last strappy sandal. Kylie started off as a squeaky clean pop child, then had a fling with Michael Hutchence and became Sex-Kylie, with lucrative results. But Jamie Redknapp, Louise's beau, is no Hutchence, and Louise is still Sandy from *Grease* before the *You're the One that I Want* scene.

veterans sent their offspring. "It's become a total rock school and the end-of-term play is amazing," Townshend says. "The Jagger children went there, Ronnie Wood's son just

left and Ian Brodie's [of the Lightning Seeds] son is there." *Five-a-Side Football*, one of the best songs on her album, deals with the nature of pop success. Its haunting refrain — "Not one warm body to ease away the misery/But think of all the money we're making"

thousands and to raise it he had to do a tour he didn't want to do at a time when his domestic situation wasn't what it might have been. That lies at the base of that song." Needless to say, the former Who guitarist is an enormously proud parent. So too is Leonard Cohen. "My son Adam is a much better and more melodic songwriter than me, and he's got a great voice, which I never had," he says. The respect is mutual and the younger Cohen has no problem in asking for fatherly advice. "He rings me up in the

middle of the night and maybe runs two lines past me and asks me which works best. I'm always ready to help." But there can also be a hint of inter-generational rivalry. Jakob and Bob Dylan have carefully avoided performing with each other and Loudon Wainwright has distinctly mixed feelings about sharing a stage with both his son Rufus and his daughter Martha. "I've brought them on in my own shows, but they're so talented to make that dangerous," he says. "I'm hoping they're going to be very suc-

cessful and buy me a house some day very soon." By Cooder, who once turned down membership of the Rolling Stones, has offered his son Joachim some very non-rock'n'roll advice. "He's played on my albums," Ry says, "and he's a really talented musician. But I've advised him to keep in college and stay on that learning curve as long as he can. The Cadillac can wait. The music industry is mean and it chews people up. There's no reason to be in any hurry, but when you are 18 you find it hard to hear that."

"VERHOEVEN PROVES HIS STATUS AS ONE OF HOLLYWOOD'S MOST WICKED ENTERTAINERS."

THE TIMES

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TELEVISION TIMES

'Television does make a difference'

It is impossible to watch Kate Blewett playing with her son and daughter without dwelling on the terrible contrast between their happiness and the wretched suffering of children that she has exposed during her career as a documentary-maker. Interview by Carol Midgley

For Blewett, the extremes are even more painfully defined. Seldom, she says, can she bathe Frederica, four, and Monty, 20 months, read them a story or see them laughing without recalling horrific images she has seen first-hand of infants dying from starvation and neglect, shackled by their hands and feet or forced into miserable servitude.

It is two years since she and co-producer Brian Woods exposed the "dying rooms" of Chinese orphanages, where babies were filmed in conditions of appalling neglect, creating a worldwide wave of revulsion.

Few who saw the pitiful image of Mei Ming, a two-year-old girl apparently in the advanced stages of malnutrition with rheum-filled eyes and a scabrous mouth, dying alone and ignored under a pile of blankets, will ever forget it. The child, dumped because of her sex and China's one-child only policy, had been deprived of food or water for 14 days.

Last month Channel 4 screened the latest missile from Woods and Blewett — a harrowing series of films charting various child abuses throughout the world, from street urchins in Guatemala turning to glue to deaden the pain of hunger and beatings by the police to five-year-old girls in Ghana sentenced to a life in temples, where they are regularly raped by the priest to appease the crimes of their families.

The most shocking exposé of the *Innocents Lost* series was generally considered to be footage from Greek institutions, Kepseps, where we saw mentally and physically disabled children tied to their cots 24 hours a day. In extreme cases where the patients were considered a danger to others, they were shut away in padlocked cages. The neglect was not born of deliberate cruelty by the carers but more from the fact that the children were deemed as "untreatable" and, therefore, low priority. Disability, the film told us, carries a huge stigma among many Greek families who fear the marriage prospects of healthy siblings may be damaged in case the "bad gene" is passed down. Imperfect children, therefore, are hastily dumped, and often never visited for the rest of their lives.

Woods and Blewett travelled 70,000 miles to 21 countries over a period of 18 months to record such scenes. Like the award-winning *Dying Rooms*, and *Return to the Dying Rooms*, *Innocents Lost* received critical acclaim. But it was not without its detractors. One critic suggested we should not have to watch such atrocities on our television screens. Some viewers called Channel 4 to complain that the team should have concentrated their efforts on exposing abuse in Britain instead, a sentiment which, Blewett says, left them profoundly depressed.

"I get really fed up with those sort of remarks, it makes me so angry. A child suffering is a child suffering. People say we should be focusing on problems in this



Kate Blewett with Monty and Frederica: "It was all very well finding out about child neglect but if I had had two miserable children at home it would have been wrong"

country but programmes go out all the time about things happening in Britain. We specifically wanted to look at children who are silenced in countries that are falling to abide by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which their governments have ratified. Do these people think we go out there for a laugh?"

Laughs would certainly not appear to have been in abundance for Blewett, 36, as she was forced to juggle the demands of a young family with global travel and the pressure of gaining access to film in the most uncooperative of places. She had an understanding with Woods that she

would not be apart from her children for more than ten days at a time, but would fly back intermittently to the family home, a large Georgian house in a fashionable area of West London. Her husband, a City financier, was helped to look after the children by two live-in Filipino women whom Blewett has known for years. The daughter of an expatriate doctor of tropical medicine, she grew up in the suburbs of Thailand, Malaysia and Hong Kong where she met the woman, a

mother and daughter, and persuaded them to move with her and her husband when they returned to England. "They really are part of our family and so it made it much easier to go, although I am not saying it was easy. I had to psyche myself up for it and explain the guilt syndrome to Brian. He was very understanding. "I knew it was all very well finding out about child neglect and exploitation but if I had had two miserable children of my

own at home it would have been wrong. Monty was younger and probably didn't notice too much but if Freddie had said she hated my work or if her character had changed I would have found it very difficult to carry out. My children are my first priority."

It was in 1994 that she noticed an article in the *South China Morning Post* saying children were being abandoned and left to die in Chinese orphanages. Blewett, working as a freelance in Asia mainly for Australian TV, decided to do her own research and travelled to China, armed with a secret pocket camera to collect the evidence.

She later met Woods, who runs an independent production company, True Vision, in London, and they secured development money from Channel 4 before returning to China.

"Anyone could have done it. It was just a case of going over and seeing it. At the time we were totally focused on getting in there and filming it but there were times when you just broke down in the hotel afterwards. We were seeing some terrible things. "It was the same in the Greek institutions. In some ways I found that almost more painful than the dying rooms. When someone is disabled you feel that life has already been so unfair to them, so when you see them in situations of such deprivation it is heart-breaking."

Blewett says that, far from exaggerating the extent of the abuse as some had suggested, they were forced to tone it down to avoid upsetting viewers.

"There were some scenes we couldn't show on television because they were just too much — children whose limbs were so disfigured they were bent right back and fingernails that had grown into their skin. No one had been making them exercise and they were just sitting. In China the mothers didn't want to give their children away, but in Greece I felt very angry that the parents simply hand over their children then leave them there for life."

She and Woods also decided not to show the children being fed, because it would be too stomach-churning for viewers. The patients are put on their backs and a milk and bread slop is poured down their throats, their faces are wiped and the nurses move on to the next.

"There were adults in there who had been there since childhood, chained to the beds. Some were completely mentally alert. One woman, Anastasia, was 25 and disabled from the waist down but her mind was sharp. She was one of triplets and her parents had dumped them all there. But the thing which has stayed with me about all the things we saw in all the different countries was that each child was as miserable as the next."

Innocents Lost provoked a certain amount of public outrage, albeit on a smaller scale than the *Dying Rooms*. Channel 4 received 11,000 calls from people and leaflets are being sent to those who expressed an interest in helping. Blewett says there are petitions being organised about the Greek institutions and wheelchairs are being offered by manufacturers in Britain. Other people have offered to organise help for boys in Siberian penal camps, and Marks & Spencer sent food parcels for the street children in Central America. She and Woods are now preparing for their next project, which is still not confirmed.

"The reaction to the films has shown that television does make a difference. When you get a child, who is not yet ten, saying to you that they want to die, you desperately want to do something. The best thing, the only thing we could do really, was document it and show it to the world and hope that it causes things to change."



THE glossy magazine *Company* focuses its February issue's health page on a letter from a reader suffering from the trauma of a drooping bosom. "I am 19 and my breasts sag really badly. When I take off my bra (I am a 34B) they just hang there and when I lie down they flop to the side and look awful."

Dr Helen Peters replies soothingly that the girl is doing everything she can through exercise etc (and advises her to concentrate "on your good points instead"). But Dr Peters then adds this sign-off line: "It may help to know that men worry just as much about having saggy testicles." "Saggy testicles?" "Never heard of it," said my husband in amazement. "Doesn't she mean brewer's droop?" asked a male friend. A tangle of male journalists on

Company: falling assets. The *Times* produced similar baitment. Perhaps Dr Peters might ring the diary and explain where she gained this insight.

KIRSTY YOUNG, the hottest name in television news, is practising for her new Talk Radio breakfast show, which starts on Monday. It pitches her against Virgin's Chris Evans, Radio 5 Live and even *Today*, a stressful slot by any standards.

She has to be in the Oxford Street studio by 5.30am, host the three-hour programme, then turn up fresh as a daisy for the much-lauded Channel 5 News, which has just moved forward to 7pm from 8.30pm. A more cloistered existence for the girl about town beckons.

"No boozey dinners on weekdays. I'll have to plan my sleep carefully without

naps in the afternoon," she says. The 28-year-old Scot, who started off as a BBC Radio Scotland presenter, signed up for a year for a sum approaching £500,000, on top of a similar amount from Channel 5.

"To be offered a slice of prime airtime was amazing," she says. "I love what I do, otherwise it would be a recipe for disaster."

The one fly in the ointment is that Channel 5's news audience has plummeted by about a quarter this week because of the earlier start.

The tone of Young's talk show can be deduced from producer and fixers: Chris Cardell, formerly with *Cap-*



DURING the protest against Manchester airport's expansion plans, a Salford media student, Sam Whittaker, now 22, shot film under commission for Channel 5's *What's the Story?* He recorded the final clearance of protesters from 80ft up a tree, as did ITN's Stewart Webb. Today Whittaker, who is now employed on the programme, is due in Crewe Magistrates' Court charged with obstruction, despite pleas from Channel 5. Paul Woolwich, the executive producer, says: "He was not a protester, he was there recording events. They would never treat Kate Adie like that." But then, would Kate Adie park herself up a tree?

BRIAN GLANVILLE, football writer for *The Times*, has emerged furious from an encounter with Radio 4. Plans to revive his hit play *The Comic*, with Roy Hudd as the mentally unstable star, were turned down finally in December to give new writers a chance. "Never again," says Glanville after ten months of being mucked around. Jonathan James Moore, the head of BBC Radio 4 light entertainment, says regretfully that the new commissioning system has created "a lot of anguish". This is the same system that kept Frank Muir's autobiography *A Kenish Lad* off the network, although Moore assures me that a proper tribute on Radio 4 is being plotted.

LAST WORD on the Jack Straw affair. Away from the media scene over new year, I found that people had no idea it was Straw's son who was at the centre of the fuss. Here is my advice: the next time anyone tries to conceal something, turn detective. Whose picture is being run next to the story? Which name is recurring without a compelling reason? Wise up.

Gone fishing for a filler. LAST WEEK the *Daily Mail* started a hunt for Britain's longest-surviving goldfish (well, it was a slow New Year's Day). "Is this the nation's oldest goldfish?" it asked of Bel Jer Ranger, Janey Walsir's 15½-year-old fish, purchased at a Badminton air show.

The *Daily Telegraph* followed the story up the next day, producing Chivers, "the goldfish that came in a Jiffy bag lives for 25 years". I wanted to see what other monsters lurked in domestic

aquariums. But a long silence ensued once newsdesks had sobered up and (presumably) realised that fish are not issued with birth certificates.

Then, on Wednesday, the *Daily Mail* returned with a letter from another owner of a 25-year-old goldfish, Toshie. I rang *The Daily Telegraph's* newsdesk to see whether they would better it. "No more stories are planned: it is a matter for the letters page," one of its news editors said, diplomatically.



Sagging is such a drag. Company: falling assets. The *Times* produced similar baitment. Perhaps Dr Peters might ring the diary and explain where she gained this insight.

Company: falling assets. The *Times* produced similar baitment. Perhaps Dr Peters might ring the diary and explain where she gained this insight.



Kirsty Young's breakfast show for Talk Radio means a more cloistered existence beckons

JUST before Christmas, Radio 4's *Today* programme had yet another spat with the Government. This time Labour spin-doctors said John Humphrys had been too rough with poor Harriet Harman as she banded to explain why cutting lone parent benefits was a good thing, and threatened non-cooperation in future. It then emerged that Labour was fearful about Kevin Marsh, the respected editor of *The World at One* and *PM*, landing the vacant post of *Today* editor. In the event, the BBC aligned on the in-house favourite, Rod Liddle. 37, the deputy editor, despite his image problem: a ring in his ear and a penchant for sitting on floors in the middle of editorial meetings. Liddle, a former pupil of Abbey Wood Comprehensive in southeast

London, trained as a newspaper journalist on Cardiff's *Western Mail* and actually worked for the Labour Party front bench, writing speeches and researching. He later studied for a degree (social psychology) at the London School of Economics. Liddle scorns the notion that Cabinet ministers are blackballing the programme (although William Hague chose to pop up on Nicky Campbell's Radio 5 slot this week) and is determined to reclaim *Today's* reputation for landing the day's major political interview, while also expanding arts and science coverage. "We have to be sharper, first, and to give reporters more scope to be brave." As for Humphrys? "I think he is unreservedly brilliant."

LAST WORD on the Jack Straw affair. Away from the media scene over new year, I found that people had no idea it was Straw's son who was at the centre of the fuss. Here is my advice: the next time anyone tries to conceal something, turn detective. Whose picture is being run next to the story? Which name is recurring without a compelling reason? Wise up.



Was I in the news just recently? No, I've forgotten

Changes in the night

Radio 3's small-hours schedule has been revamped for Europe

RADIO 3 has changed its night-time schedules. *Through the Night*, running from 1am to 6am, is going European with a music programme simultaneously broadcast across much of the Continent.

Although Radio 3's plans to shake up its mornings have hogged the limelight, in the early hours of Tuesday its programme for night-owls was altered — although little was said to listeners. The presenter, Donald Macleod, will stay on but the music selections devised for British listeners are being replaced by a more eclectic mix of classics to appeal to a Europe-wide audience. They will know it as "Euroclassical Nocturno".

The programme is created in London under the direction of Peter Thresh, a respected producer who oozes enthusiasm. It is then distributed around Europe by satellite for simultaneous broadcast on subscribing local stations. The trick is that the costs of serving this tiny but cultured audience are initially being shared around six publicly funded radio stations in Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands, Ireland and Slovenia.

Thanks to the production/broadcasting split of last year, the BBC's Radio Classical Music Department is no longer an integral part of Radio 3, but it is still housed in Broadcasting House and is anxious to expand its empire. The department beat other European stations for the two-year contract to supply the overnight service for public radio stations. The initiative is driven by the Geneva-based European Broadcasting Union, which was impressed with Radio 3's original *Through the Night*.

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CHRISTMAS produced a television mystery worthy of the skills of both Miss Marple and Hetty Wainthrop. Millions of people went missing without any warning or obvious explanation. When the ratings people checked, they were simply not there. Naturally, the BBC issued its usual press release - It Was A BBC Christmas Official, claiming its Christmas trouncing of ITV. This is a bit like saying that Santa Claus appeared on Christmas Eve this year as usual. The BBC always wins the Christmas ratings battle with ITV and always has, although there have been some close squeaks over the years. It is a curious fact of life in British television that on high days and holidays and even when the BBC and ITV are covering the same England football match simultaneously, the corporation scores an effortless victory.

Yet you could study the Christmas press releases for a very long time without finding any reference to the missing millions. When you lose viewers, the smart thing for broadcasters to do is to talk about share of viewing. This covers up the problem rather nicely because you can convert hard numbers to percentages and all seems well. So it was that BBC Television was able to claim perfectly properly that it took a 46.5 per cent share of viewing in Christmas week to ITV's 29.7 per cent while Channel 5 had a respectable, but hardly gift-wrapped, 3.2 per cent.

The week's top show, excluding soaps, was *Men Behaving Badly*, total audience 16.34 million, including those who later watched it on their videos. This compared badly with the 22 million peak hit by what was billed as the last ever *Only Fools and Horses*. There were other similarly worrying disappearing audiences.

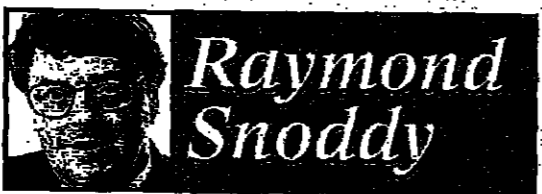
It was perhaps inevitable that columnists, particularly those who have only recently discovered satellite TV and all those endless films, should rush to pronounce the death of terrestrial, or network, TV, as it is increasingly called these days. In a transactional world where the viewer will be able to choose what to watch and when to watch it, all for a relatively modest fee, who needs conventional television, goes the argument. Up to a point. It may happen some day but not just yet and there is very little in the official Barb ratings to suggest a stampede to satellite. Cable and satellite's share of total viewing, at 11.7 per cent, was marginally up, probably reflecting the number of

new subscribers during the year. In cable and satellite houses the share won by the new channels was 34.6 per cent, nowhere near the peak of more than 40 per cent. During last year's Christmas period, Sky's top four programmes were football matches. This year the top four programmes were football matches. The truth is that the satellite broadcasters make very little fuss about Christmas and seem to make few seasonal concessions in the schedules. Special Christmas Eve fare from Sky movies to take viewers into the early hours of Christmas Day was the excellent but extremely violent film *Heat*. VH-1, the satellite pop music channel for 30-year-olds, did at least manage something special for Christmas - its own Queen's Speech. It was delivered by Brian May, the Queen guitarist.

But if the missing millions did not move to satellite in overwhelming numbers, where did they go? Will Wyatt, chief executive of BBC Broadcasting, is worried enough to call for an internal study. He wants a seven-year comparison to find out whether there really is a noticeable downward trend or whether this was a rogue year and the Christmas ratings simply do go up and down over the years in unpredictable ways.

One thing that will have changed is the relative pecking power of films in the schedules of the national broadcasters. By the time that most films reach the conventional TV screens, a high proportion of viewers will already have seen them in cinemas, on cable and satellite or on video. The top ITV film over Christmas was *Pretty Woman*, which is known by heart by most of the audience. It still managed to draw 8.8 million, but it's not hard to see why it did not get 15 million.

ANOTHER factor was almost certainly other screen-based diversions. Children and adults who were given computer games were less likely to have been on the sofa for Harry Enfield. Perhaps more people simply fled the country this year. In any case, the UK's traditional broadcasters undoubtedly face years of intensifying competition. Planning for next year's Christmas viewing should start now, and if the BBC has any sense, it will concentrate on luring *Del Boy* and *Rodney* out of retirement so that *Only Fools and Horses* can top the Christmas ratings again and win back some of the missing millions.



Raymond Snoddy

Richard Evans on an odds-on favourite that was overtaken by events

For followers of the Turf, it had become virtually a one-horse race. The tabloid *Racing Post*, funded by the wealth of the Maktoum family of Dubai, was galloping clear of the broadsheet *Sporting Life* after a head-to-head circulation war going back more than ten years.

The *Post*, with sales bolstered by a special edition that replaced the *Life* in many of Britain's 8,500 betting shops, could apparently do no wrong. A young, enthusiastic staff, led by a talented editor and including a champion tipster, produced a vibrant newspaper packed with news, features and accurate statistics - the lifeblood of punters.

The *Life*, by contrast, haunted by a suspect production system, a dodgy database and questionable management decisions, was too often riddled with mistakes or omissions and appeared, like some of its staff, one-paced and destined for the horse's yard. To most outsiders it was a question of when, not if, the *Post* would be declared the winner. Imagine the surprise and shock, therefore, when Mirror Group Newspapers, owners of the *Life*, announced a month ago that it had, in effect, acquired the *Post* from the Maktoums for £1. No one at the *Post's* Raynes Park offices, including a board of directors that was kept in the dark about the deal, could believe it. Not since Dick Francis and Devon Loch inexplicably sprang to the ground within sight of the winning post in the 1956 Grand National had defeat been snatched from the jaws of victory so spectacularly. And still they ask the same question: why?

There has been no satisfactory answer; perhaps there

Pipped at the Post

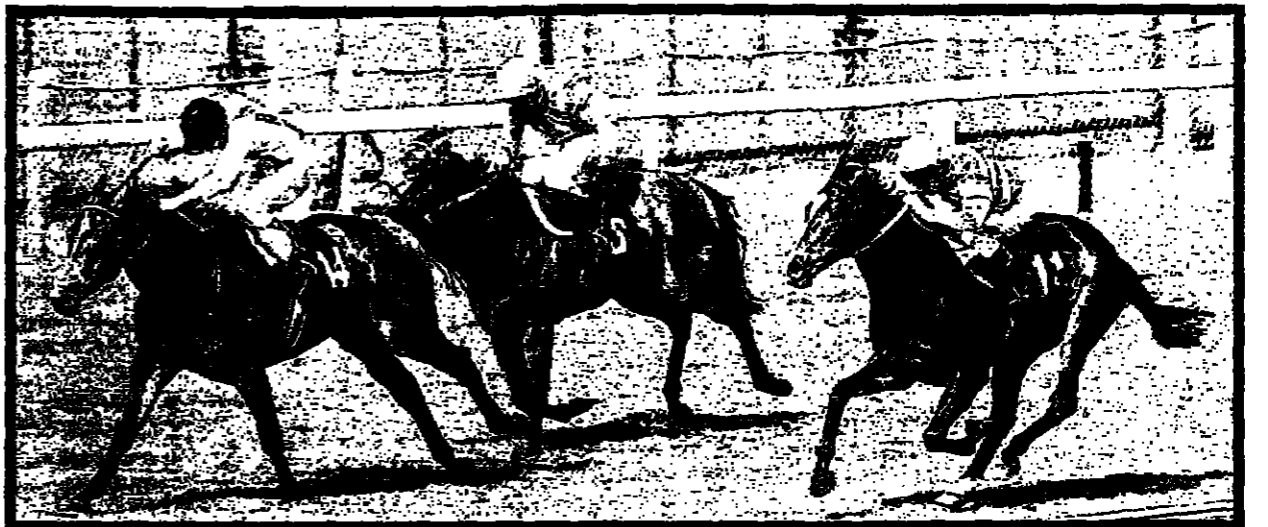
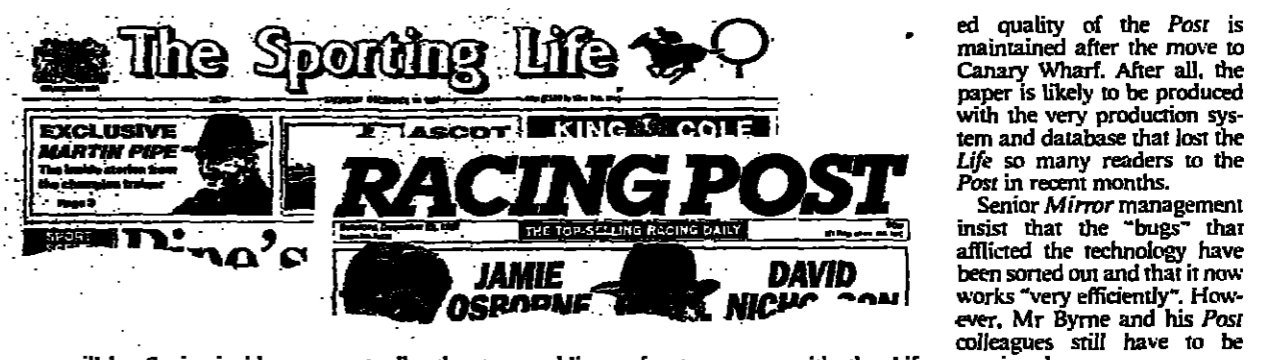


Photo finish: after a 12-year battle over control of the Turf, The Sporting Life has acquired its rival for £1



never will be. Senior insiders at Mirror Group say the straw that broke the camel's back was the special betting shop edition of the *Post* which, while giving the tabloid a circulation lead, postponed still further the day when the paper would break even. "The *Post* thought it was cutting the *Life's* throat with that edition; in fact, it was cutting its own," a Mirror insider said.

Not so, say *Post* executives, who insist the edition was "ever did inflict damage on our competitor". Still, nobody disputes that the Maktoums have lost probably upwards of £50 million since the paper's launch, and, while the scale of the losses had declined, profit still seemed a mirage to Sheikh Mohammed and his brothers.

And so a deal was done - "very quickly in the end" - that saw Mirror Group guarantee publication of the *Post* for ten years, with the *Life* becoming a general sports paper. Days later Sheikh Mohammed also announced that he would reduce his string of horses in training in Britain unless there was a dramatic increase in prize-money - lending more weight to the financial argument for offloading the *Post*.

Subject to approval by the Department of Trade and Industry, the changeover is likely to take place some time after the Grand National in April. Two racing staffs will be reduced to one under the editorship of Alan Byrne, who has been at the helm of the *Post* since 1993. He will decide which journalists - about 80 from both papers - will join the new *Post*. Large-scale redundancies appear inevitable. But his toughest task may be to ensure that the undisputed quality of the *Post* is maintained after the move to Canary Wharf. After all, the paper is likely to be produced with the very production system and database that lost the *Life* so many readers to the *Post* in recent months.

Senior *Mirror* management insist that the "bugs" that afflicted the technology have been sorted out and that it now works "very efficiently". However, Mr Byrne and his *Post* colleagues still have to be convinced.

And will *Mirror* Group, not renowned for investing in journalism, be prepared to put in the necessary resources to maintain a trade paper that will have no direct competition? What is to stop them, sceptics ask, from constantly trimming the budget - and journalistic coverage - so the *Post* becomes nothing more than a "glorified tipping sheet" similar to the *Life* in the days before the *Post*.

The answer may lie in the hands of Mr Byrne - a determined and widely respected Editor - who will need to be assured that he will have the wherewithal to do the job properly. If the *Racing Post* continues to be edited by the 35-year-old Dubliner in Canary Wharf, then the punters can breathe a sigh of relief. If not, then the future is worrying.

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Changes in the night

media times

Editor accuses Chirac of interference

The influential Editor of Le Monde says politicking stopped his vital purchase of a news magazine. Report by Alan Tillier

French media politics are far meaner than anything that appears in the newspapers. Soft-spoken but tough-minded Jean-Marie Colombani, the 50-year-old Editor and saviour of France's leading daily, Le Monde, talks of threats from on high and shifting alliances within France's largely intertwined political and media fronts.

Communication, was created to deal with the media. Cultural coverage, already strong, was improved. More foreign correspondents were added, articles became more focused. The style became more readable, less literary.

Above all, M Colombani says he changed the thinking among the staff, "who used to regard anything non-political with contempt. Now we cover many more issues affecting French society."

More photographs were used in a paper once likened by its critics to Pravda, and colour was introduced. M Colombani, previously an "insider's insider" after 20 years as political correspondent, blossomed as a more Anglo-American, news-orientated editor.

One scoop for the new-look paper was the last interview with Diana, Princess of Wales, in which she spoke out against anti-personnel mines, and caused a flap with remarks about the Royal Family. This week Le Monde ran two pages on the life and loves of the pop star Johnny Halliday, which would have been unimaginable a short while ago.

L'Express, founded by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, a famous campaigning journalist in the 1960s, has become more like an American news magazine. It passed to the late Sir James Goldsmith, then to Alcatel, the phone company, and CGE.

Industrialists and financiers own titles to gain influence, not to make serious money. The news magazines make small profits, but only two or three dailies are in the black. They include the popular daily tabloid Le Parisien (438,000) and its stablemate, the sports daily L'Equipe (400,000). Price is one factor for France's weak press - Le Monde sells at Fr7.50 a day.

Journalists at Le Monde still own 33 per cent of the shares, which gives them a "blocking minority" under French law. But they no longer rule the roost, as they did in the often chaotic years after Le Monde's founder, Hubert Beuve-Méry, stepped down in 1969 after 25 years as director. Staff preferred almost endless meetings about the paper's ownership and content to actually seeking the news. Daily sales slumped to 260,000 in the mid-1980s.

M Beuve-Méry had made Le Monde France's paper of reference. "It's not true until it's in Le Monde," cynical Parisians would say in the stormy days of the Republic. Its prestige declined as bankruptcy loomed.

M Colombani, who proved himself capable of controlling 300 highly opinionated staffers, says the paper is closer to "left-wing values", but that he has no illusions about the Socialists, who tapped his journalists' phones regularly during the Mitterrand era.

Mitterrand's staff, in fact, regarded its chief investigative reporter Edwy Plenel as "a dangerous leftwinger". M Colombani has named him as his deputy. M Plenel has brought in young investigative reporters such as Hervé Gattegno, now unveiling dubious details about the financial deals being made by French oil companies in Africa.

M Colombani says: "There would have been strong symmetry between Le Monde and L'Express." He went after the title when the president of CGE, Jean-Marie Messier, announced his intention of selling both L'Express and Le Point.

M Messier hoped that the sales would protect his television interests, notably the successful pay-TV channel Canal Plus. The new Socialist Government had said that it would limit television and media ownership by companies benefiting from substantial state contracts.

Still bitter, M Colombani maintains M Messier called off the £50 million sale of L'Express to him after pressure from politicians in the conservative camp, who were anxious about the centre-left Le Monde strengthening its position within the French media.

Sitting for once in his Left Bank office (the main 7.30am editorial conference is a stand-up affair), M Colombani can only barely contain his anger. "Big business in France considers the press a means of trafficking influence or as a plaything. We wanted to create an independent group, but that seems impossible in France."

M Messier's office denied these accounts. His spokeswoman, while admitting that there had been a "mad week of typically Parisian and French rumours" before the non-sale, added that Le Monde's offer had not been financially viable and had not been accepted by L'Express journalists. However, M Colombani made a tactical error when he said that he would have fired the Editor of L'Express had the deal been finalised. L'Express journalists do not have the final say in ownership matters like their Le Monde colleagues, but they feared for their future and voted against a sale to Le Monde.

The L'Express setback was M Colombani's first serious reverse since 1993, when he was elected directeur by the staff after ten years of decline linked to mismanagement and constant internal bickering. The title means both editor-in-chief and managing director.

M Colombani revealed an ability to attract new shareholders. He convinced a number of big French firms that it was good for their image to have a small stake in the paper. Other stakes of about 2 per cent each are now held by Italy's La Stampa, Canal Plus, Switzerland's Edipress and the Barclay brothers' European Press Holdings. This year, says M Colombani, the profit will be "very satisfactory, and will continue for the next few years".



Le Monde has been pulled back from the brink but it needs another publication to strengthen its position as Europe's most highbrow newspaper

'We wanted to create an independent group, but that seems impossible'

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The voice of choice all over the Middle East

Michael Binyon looks at the influence of the BBC Arabic Service over the past 60 years

Largely ignored by those who pay for it, one of the world's most influential radio stations has been celebrating 60 years of broadcasting from London. With an audience running into millions, an authority unparalleled in the Middle East and an extraordinary hold on the kings, presidents, generals and statesmen who regularly tune in, the BBC Arabic Service can claim to have done more to influence the turbulent politics of the region than any other news medium.

The BBC World Service broadcasts in Arabic for 17 hours a day — more than in any other language. It is the biggest, oldest and arguably most crucial of all the 40 or more language services that beam Britain's voice to the world from Bush House.

It has also suffered more political pressure, more outrage and more challenges to the independence of the BBC than any of the other language services. The refusal by the Arabic Service to bow to the intense pressure from Anthony Eden's Government to broadcast propaganda during the Suez crisis in 1956 was a determining point in the long history of the entire BBC to assert its impartiality and editorial independence from the Government. What the Arabic Service did in 1956 still carries weight in how the BBC conducts its relations with the Government.

The service started in 1938, when Britain still ruled Palestine and Iraq under a United Nations mandate and had extensive interests in the Arab Near East. The first broadcast was introduced by Sir John Reith, the BBC's Director-General. Around the Arab world, leaders were alerted to



The young King Hussein was among Arab leaders who ensured that their views spread from Rabat to the Gulf via Bush House

listen to the first announcement of "Hana London" (London Calling), which has been the station's call sign ever since.

Editorial independence was challenged from the start. The first news bulletin included a report that the British authorities had hanged an Arab in Palestine for possession of a rifle and ammunition. The Foreign Office complained, alarmed at the effect of such news on the Arab world, and called for "selection and omission of news". Sir John refused, and so began establishing a reputation for impartiality and credibility.

This was often extremely difficult, given the crises that regularly shook Britain's relations with the region: the founding of Israel in 1948, Suez, the Black September civil war in Jordan, the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and more recently the Gulf War. But it has been, especially during such crises, that Arabs have tuned in in their millions, coming to the reluctant conclusion that Nasser's "Voice of the Arabs" was unreliable and that many other local stations were poorly informed. A survey conducted soon after the Six Day war in 1967 found that despite the anger directed against the West for what was seen as partiality towards Israel, the BBC was the more widely trusted source of news, with a commanding lead in audiences over all other Western external broadcasters.

The formula has been the tested recipe for BBC success elsewhere: sober news programmes, topical commentary, up-to-date analyses with a mix of sport, music, drama and items of particular interest to the Arab world — Koranic readings or explanations of Arab proverbs. Broad-

casters are always native speakers, and the service decided early on to stick to modern literary Arabic and avoid regional dialects. The formula has had to become more jazzy to keep pace with the growing competition, especially from commercial successes such as Radio Monte Carlo or the more sophisticated Arab stations. The fusty translated talks by British orientalists have long gone, as have talks by former British ambassadors and the staid projections of British life.

A key question has always been control. The BBC language services are funded directly by the Foreign Office, and in times of crisis have been used — by agreement — to broadcast urgent messages; for example, during operations to evacuate Britons caught in civil wars. During the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, when Britain had to show that it was impartial, Edward Heath, the Prime Minister, ordered the Arabic service to broadcast his statement that Britain would seek a ceasefire without discussion of who started the fighting. It went out that same evening.

There have been lapses: Palestinian announcers upset by the 1970 civil war in Jordan, delivered the news in a way that made clear their anger at King Hussein; the subsequent inquiry called for much stricter monitoring. Another time a tape of a Koranic reading was played backwards for some time before the studio noticed.

Almost every Arab leader has denounced the Arabic Service at different times: President Sadat of Egypt tried jamming and threatened to take action against all Egyptians working for the BBC because of a report of an abortive coup; more recently the Saudis were angered at the

Let cornflakes do the talking

Britannic tries a novel way to address staff. Raymond Snoddy reports

Yesterday the Britannic Assurance group did something it had never done before — it advertised on national television. The Midlands-based company's promotional efforts used to concentrate on the press, the sides of buses and, in recent years, on sponsorship of the county cricket championship. Now Britannic, a company founded in 1866, has decided to join the marketing revolution.

The 3½-minute advertisement shown on GMTV, the commercial breakfast station, at 8.14 yesterday was unusual in another way: it was aimed at only 4,000 people, its staff. The company worked out that it would probably be less expensive, and certainly less inconvenient, to use television to reach its employees rather than trying to bring them all together in a venue such as the National Exhibition Centre.

So staff, who had been begging Britannic for years to advertise on TV like most of its rivals, were asked to watch the ad at home or in the office. They were even sent mock cereal packets with the message: "Enjoy the delicious taste of cornflakes while you enjoy the first ever Britannic TV commercial."

Apart from the advertisement, which will be at the centre of a £4 million national TV and press campaign, the broadcast was designed to introduce employees to the company's new logo and corporate identity, one of the most extensive marketing "make-overs" of recent years.

The task was carried out by Team Saatchi, the multi-disciplinary advertising organisation that became involved with Britannic three years ago, mainly to advise on internal communication. From there, the commission evolved into repositioning the "brand". Michael Parker, Team Saatchi's chief executive, says: "They had a set of letters that read 'Britannic Assurance' in a boring typeface."

As he came to know the company better, Mr Parker realised that Britannic had a



Swans: image for Britannic

face-to-face relationship with its clients, one that was sometimes handed down from parent to child. So a member of his team came up with the image of swans, which mate for life. The commercial was shot at a swan refuge, and two stylised swans are now part of the logo, appearing on all its redesigned sales literature.

Bill Haynes, who last February became Britannic's first sales and marketing director, says: "This is the company's first concerted effort to build and develop a brand strategically. It did not fit into how Britannic wanted to portray itself in the past."

In the six months to the end of June 1996, Britannic had a 211 per cent increase to £80 million, in operating profit, although it has, like many in the sector, faced problems over personal pensions. Britannic has set aside £150 million to meet possible compensation claims for mis-selling personal pensions. In July it suspended its sales force for a week to check their level of training.

Mr Haynes maintains that the new identity and advertising campaign is unrelated to such problems and points out that Britannic has never been fined or censured.

Mr Parker believes that one of the purposes of advertising is to make employees feel good about their company. "The knowledge that they were going on TV has already changed the dynamic," he says. And the dynamic will change further, because as well as going on national TV for the first time, Britannic also glided away yesterday from its headquarters in Solihull to most premises on the outskirts of Birmingham.

Time's up for ITV's big three

EXPECT to see ITV's new big three — the chief executive Richard Eyre, the director of programming David Liddiment and the commercial and marketing director John Hardie — all over the media next week as the "100 days" of analysis and strategic planning, instigated by Eyre when he joined from Capital Radio, comes to an end.

First signs of the trio's 100-day manifesto are that its thrust will be a pledge to attack the BBC's audience share rather than commercial rivals, and to put an end to infighting between the three major ITV advertising sales groupings: Carlton UK Sales (representing Carlton and Central), Laser sales (Granada, Yorkshire, Tyne-Tees, LWT and Border) and TSMS, owned by United News and Media (Meridian, Anglia, Westcountry, HTV, UTV, Scottish, Grampian and S4C).

The pledge comes in part as a response to calls from the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising that ITV's Network Centre be more accountable. Eyre will commit to increasing audience share against the BBC, particularly in crucial demographic groups. Britain's advertisers are obsessed with the 16 to 34-year-old target market, despite the increased spending power of the so-called grey market. ITV may well increase its share of the over-55s, but this will not satisfy them.

ITV has shown it can compete on sport with its Formula One and FA Cup coups; now it must commission its own *This Life*, or import a *Friends*, *ER* or *Murder One*. These are shows that grow beyond a cult following and are watched by just the high-spending young audience ITV's advertisers desire.



Stefano Hatfield

A cultural change is required in programming and advertising sales. Individual commissioning editors must have permission to risk failure. And when a programme has potential (*London Bridge*) it must not be oversanctified in pursuit of mass ratings. And there is little chance of changing ITV's culture while the sales houses continue to price airtime according to the convoluted "station average price system" based on an individual station's share of total ITV viewing.

Station average price is a franchise's total monthly advertising revenue divided by its average audience. Media buying agencies try to obtain discounts against the price for their clients by pledging to spend a greater percentage of their clients' total television budget with a station than that station's share of total ITV viewing merits.

Still with me? It is clear that with all clients expecting discounts, agencies are tempted to overpromise. In turn, sales houses fail to deliver the promised audience ratings and pledge ever bigger discounts in return for share. It has even

been known for some ITV sales people to encourage agencies to spend money beyond ITV to keep up their station's ITV share. Why not if you are bonused on your share of ITV?

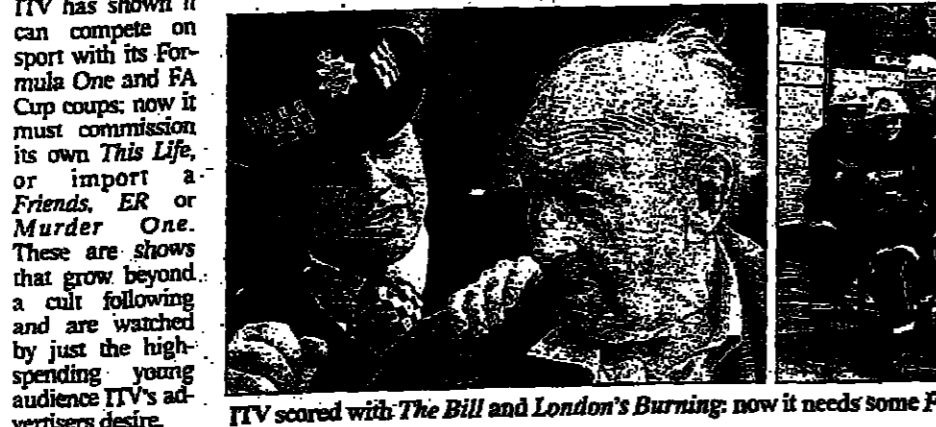
If radical initiatives are really taken next week to bring ITV together in the way the ad community wants — such as biting the bullet and moving *News at Ten* or scrapping station average price — ITV has a good chance of rejuvenating itself. If not, despite their honourable intentions, its talented new trio may have to content themselves with managing long-term decline.

THE 1997 winner of *Campaign* magazine's advertising agency of the year is St Luke's, which has shown that you can be different and thrive in the London marketplace.

Born of the ashes of Chiat Day, when the staff refused to accept a takeover by TBWA, St Luke's was set up two years ago as adland's first workers' cooperative. The agency did not lose a major client and had a stunning first year doing innovative work for the likes of Eurostar, Boots cosmetics and Ikea.

And 1997 was even better. St Luke's won important new business, notably the Labour Government's Welfare to Work campaign and a place on the Coca-Cola and United Distillers' rosters. There was outstanding work for Ikea, Radio 1 and Clark's shoes, among others. The agency continued to ignore conventions about structure, declined to share the industry's obsession with awards and split itself into smaller units, moving from traditional advertising into such areas as documentary making.

Stefano Hatfield is Editor of *Campaign*.



ITV scored with *The Bill* and *London's Burning*; now it needs some *Friends*

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EDUCATION

Don Foster, the Liberal Democrat education spokesman, on his plans for a new curriculum

Back to the real basics

Will the education system of the future provide the necessary keys to learning and deliver excellence for all?

I am not convinced — not based on the evidence of the past 100 years. As our manufacturing economy developed a century ago, so too did a system of formal schooling based on then successful industrial business models. Formal learning in schools became a largely abstract activity based on production-line techniques, separating children from the community at large and the informal learning that used to take place within it.

In reality our education system has changed little in the past 100 years. All we have done is to tinker. Yet the system will change because it must — it is falling the nation. More than 12,000 children were excluded from school last year; one in nine left school without any formal qualification; half our adults lack the necessary reading skills to use a bus timetable.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, said last July: "To overcome economic and social disadvantage and to make equality of opportunity a reality, we must eliminate — and never excuse — underachievement in the most deprived parts of our country." Who could disagree? Yet our education system — despite all the tinkering over the past 18 years — has merely helped to perfect failure.

And while the production-line model of schooling may be reasonably good at developing basic skills (though, as we know from literacy and numeracy scores, not that good), it does little to promote social, practical and problem-solving skills; little to develop creativity, enterprise or collaborative working. What we need — but haven't got — was summed up recently by Singapore's Prime Minister, who said: "What is critical is that we fire in our students a passion for learning, instead of them studying for the sake of getting good grades in their examinations. It is the capacity to learn that will define excellence in the future, not simply what young people learn in school."

The system will also change because rapid developments in information and communication technologies will force change upon us. But keeping



The challenge facing us is to develop an education system that is truly inclusive — from the cradle to the grave

up will be difficult. The Government's plans for a National Grid for Learning already look dated.

Technological developments will force our education to change or simply be overtaken. And the education system will change because we know so much more about how people learn. We can now back up with research findings what the Ancient Chinese knew intuitively: "Tell me, and I forget; show me, and I remember; let me do, and I understand."

Yet we continue to promote a failed education system based on an insupportable approach to learning. So what can we do? As we move towards the next millennium, the greatest challenge facing us all is to develop a system that is truly inclusive, from the cradle to the grave. We must not do the same things better, we must do them differently.

An inclusive system means starting early. Research shows that the best time for learning is at a very early age, from birth to three, when children are with their parents. So local authorities, working with the health service, must focus more attention on supporting parents — acknowledging that parents are, at all stages in a child's life, the primary educators, who deserve and need more support.

In order to boost early years provision, we should provide funding for three as well as four-year-olds. And, above all, we should start to treat the early years as a distinct phase within the education system. An early years key stage should be established. An inclusive education system also means one in which each of the phases within it is fairly funded. If there is to be little in the way of significant extra funding, then we should

re-evaluate our priorities in the allocation of existing funds to ensure maximum effect.

We must question why, for example, we accept larger classes and less preparation time for teachers in primary than in secondary schools. If there is no extra money for primary schools, then we should consider reallocating some secondary school funding to them.

Nor can we continue the huge disparities in funding for each post-16 student depending on whether provision is made in school sixth forms or colleges. There needs to be far greater commonality of funding and hard decisions will have to be made to achieve it.

Inclusivity will also mean treating educators — teachers and lecturers — as professionals. Of course, such an approach would bring with it reciprocal responsibilities. Teachers and lecturers alike need to look anew at what it means not just to be treated as a professional, but to be one.

We must fire in our students a passion for learning

Towns, gowns and unpalatable truths

Oxbridge is not a public school closed shop. It just wants academic self-starters, says Martin Stephen

This year independent schools have yet again provided nearly half the successful applicants for Oxford and Cambridge. As a result the Left shrieks "unfair advantage" and demands quotas, while the Right damns the failure of comprehensives to deliver the academic goods. The fuss made over these figures is often cynical and wholly hypocritical. Who goes to Oxbridge is a revelation of two separate truths.

The first truth concerns the nature of the world's great universities. No one who deals regularly with admissions to Oxford or Cambridge can doubt the sincere commitment on the part of those universities to being a meritocracy. They would like nothing more than to admit more pupils from the state sector. Yet the great universities of the world — Harvard and Yale, the Sorbonne, Oxford and Cambridge — are not teaching institutions. They exist for research; undergraduate teaching is merely a way of paying the research bills.

They do not have the resources to make up for a candidate's lack of knowledge. They cannot do the job the school should have done. Those who apply to them have to hit the first year running. Oxford and Cambridge admit those best qualified to cope with the demanding courses they offer. It is not their fault that the independent sector provides proportionately more of these candidates.

The failure is not that of Oxford or Cambridge, but of the education system that deals with 93 per cent of the school population. Oxford and Cambridge must be left free to accept candidates who will best cope with the courses on offer. If a disproportionate number of those candidates come from the independent sector, then the answer lies

with Government. Equally clearly, Government has two options if it seriously wants to open up access to Oxford and Cambridge. Neither is exclusive.

First, it could acknowledge the need in all schools for an academic fast lane. It should heap praise on the large number of comprehensive schools and sixth-form colleges which have recognised this fact. It should encourage more to do so. Like all roads, this fast lane needs funding. It also needs a change of attitude.

Perhaps most of all, it needs Government to think the unthinkable. Independent schools succeed at Ox-

bridge in part because they can recruit excellent graduate teachers. These teachers choose to teach in independent schools because in so doing, they know they will not be required to teach those with no interest in academic achievement. Is it not time that the maintained sector of education was allowed to recruit specialist academic teachers who would only be asked to teach children with academic aspirations? The Health Service has GPs, and it has consultants. The comprehensive sector needs its consultants, just as it needs its GPs.

Secondly, Government should recognise the expertise that the independent sector has in teaching and training pupils for Oxbridge. If a fair price can be agreed, it should buy in those services for pupils whose schools cannot provide them. Yet Oxford and Cambridge also need to think the unthinkable. Many parents with children in the independent sector have a vision of the university hierarchy that dates back many years. In that hierarchy, Oxford and Cambridge are at the top. Bristol comes next. Durham and Exeter offer socially acceptable alternatives. The parent must imprint on the child. As a result, a far higher proportion of pupils in independent schools aspire to Oxbridge.

This is at odds with the vision of many pupils whose families do not have a tradition of university entry. For these young people, Oxford and Cambridge are very dull. Cambridge is a small market town in the wilderness of Fenlands. Its clubbing scene is non-existent, its soccer club hopeless and college life there is claustrophobic.

Where is the excitement? Somewhere like Nottingham or Birmingham. A huge, purpose-built campus means that everyone is guaranteed accommodation in the first year. At the same time, the student has access to all the excitement of the big city whenever he or she wishes. There is the excitement of a vast social mix, from Eton to Grange Hill. Finally there are the courses — designed by lecturers who have listened to their students and increasingly based on negotiation with employers about what they really want.

Oxford and Cambridge have failed to realise that young people brought up in the hard school of comprehensive education fail to see why the Oxbridge cake is worth the candle.

Dr Stephen is High Master of Manchester Grammar School.

Cambridge is a small market town in the wilderness

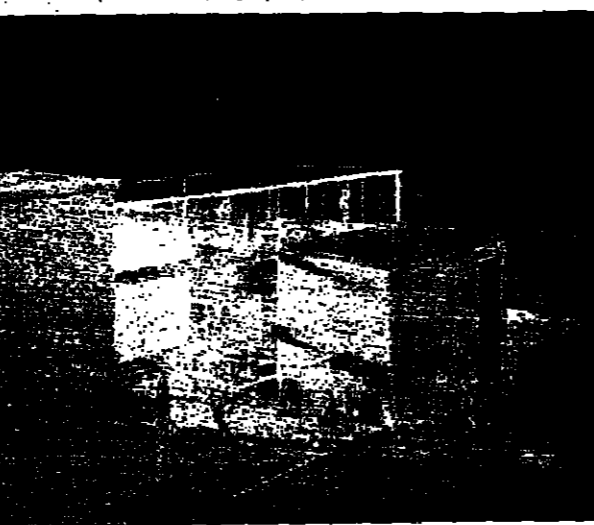
with Government. Equally clearly, Government has two options if it seriously wants to open up access to Oxford and Cambridge. Neither is exclusive. First, it could acknowledge the need in all schools for an academic fast lane. It should heap praise on the large number of comprehensive schools and sixth-form colleges which have recognised this fact. It should encourage more to do so. Like all roads, this fast lane needs funding. It also needs a change of attitude. Perhaps most of all, it needs Government to think the unthinkable. Independent schools succeed at Ox-

Challenging dyslexia

Ronnie Corbett is leading the fight to build a new special school in London. David Charter reports



Above: Mr Corbett; below: how the school should look



The comedian Ronnie Corbett is spearheading a campaign to create the first day school for teenage dyslexics in London, after struggling to find help for his own dyslexic grandson.

Emma Corbett's search for suitable schooling for her son Thomas highlighted the shortage of places available for children who need intensive help, and whose families do not want to send them away to board.

The Moat School, a £1.7 million project in Fulham, south-west London, has been gaining momentum over the past year, but is still struggling to reach its goal of opening this September.

It has a site — a disused former secondary school — and is in the process of recruiting a head teacher. It has big plans for a dyslexia research centre and bursaries to help parents who are unable to afford its fees. But organisers of the Constable Educational Trust, which is behind the scheme, know it could all still founder without a final fundraising push now.

In all, the trust has raised £700,000. In December it was offered a further £250,000, provided it could raise matching funds between then and the end of this month. So far just £40,000 has been found.

Ronda Fogel, co-founder of the trust, says: "We are having meetings upon meetings upon meetings. The school will eventually be for 100 pupils aged 11 to 16, starting with 30 in its first year. But with 40 children on our database already, that is the least of our problems."

The trust has an impressive list of patrons alongside Ronnie Corbett, including Lord Rogers of Riverside, Anthea Turner and Jeremy Irons.

A vigilant nursery teacher spotted Thomas Corbett's dyslexia when Thomas was just four years old and having difficulty with the alphabet. But even with the great advan-

tage of having his condition known early, his primary years have been split between mainstream school and a specialist unit which is an hour's drive away from his mother's house. Now Thomas is nine-and-a-half, his grandfather is fully aware of how difficult it is to find secondary school places. "Thomas went to a primary

school near where my daughter lives and had some help for his dyslexia, but it is never really enough," Ronnie Corbett says. "We decided it would be worth going to a proper place for two or three years, so he is equipped to return to mainstream school. We found a small unit and he is driven to it every day. Fortunately we can afford to

take him there, because without that he would be lost.

"People are recognising what dyslexia is, that these children are not stupid. We all had children in our schools who had dyslexia but it was probably not recognised. I remember a boy in my class who used to pretend that his eyesight was going to avoid reading aloud, and now I realise that he was probably suffering from dyslexia."

Ronda Fogel was a co-founder of the trust two-and-a-half years ago, when she learnt that the Diocesan Board of London could make a school building available. It was originally her dream to start a school that her dyslexic daughter, now 14, could attend, but the Moat School will not be ready in time.

"My daughter is at boarding school and wants to come back, but I would not move her now," she says. "Unfortunately the school will not be for her, but hopefully it will be there for future generations. We are doing this because there is a desperate need in London, and we all believe in the project."

Thomas will be a candidate for admittance to the school, provided the project becomes reality. But is this the right time to be building a specialist school for dyslexics, when the general thrust of government policy is to integrate such children into normal classes?

Ronnie Corbett is in no doubt. "Until they have proved themselves strong enough to handle a normal classroom curriculum and routine, it seems to me best to have full-time specialist teaching," he says.

"I do not agree with putting dyslexic children into a normal class and assuming they will catch up. There are just not enough specialist secondary schools for the number of children who suffer from dyslexia."

The Constable Educational Trust, 4 Constable Close, London NW11 6TY (0181-458 2064).

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Further details together with an application form can be obtained from the Secretary to the Governing Body of Oundle School, Grocers' Hall, Princes Street, London EC2R 8AD.

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Magdalen College School Oxford

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مركزنا التخصصي

Favourite ruled out of Ladbroke

BY CHRIS MCGRATH
FOR reasons that do not seem that obvious, Dame Fortune has certainly been smiling on Ladbrokes. Yesterday, however, she surpassed even the magnificence of recent days when Commanche Court was scratched from the Leopardstown Hurdle at Leopardstown tomorrow.



Quinn, nearside, is caught dropping his hands on Badrinath at Lingfield yesterday

Quinn receives ban after mighty blunder

BY CHRIS MCGRATH
JIMMY QUINN, normally such a dependable servant to punters, incurred their wrath at Lingfield yesterday after making a blunder as expensive as it was uncharacteristic. The jockey was suspended for 14 days after easing up in the closing stages of the opening race on the 5-4 favourite, Badrinath, committing the 12-1 chance Bon Guest to get back up to win by a short head.

Quinn confessed to the stewards that he had mistaken the winning post, and certainly there would have been little point trying to win cleverly on a horse that idles in front. His trainer, Hugh Collingridge, said: "I told Jimmy that this was a lazy horse, who needed keeping up to his work."

RESULTS FROM LINGFIELD YESTERDAY

Table with columns for race number, horse name, jockey, and odds. Includes races like 'Going standard', '1.00 (m) 21', '1.10 (m) 21', etc.

Prospects for Sandown improve

HOPES are high that Sandown will be able to stage its valuable televised card tomorrow. But it will have the British jumps stage to itself after yesterday's cancellation of Haydock and Warwick.

No inspection is planned for Sandown, from where Channel 4 is due to show four races, including the grade one Sun King of the Punters Tolworth Hurdle.

SOUTHWELL

Table listing race details for Southwell, including race number, horse name, jockey, and odds.

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

1.10 SHIFING 2.40 Sealed By Fate
1.40 Greenstair 3.10 She's A Gem
1.20 MONDRAGON (nap) 3.40 Broadsails Beauty

FORM FOCUS

1.10 HOOPLA MAIDEN STAKES (£3,436; 1m 3f) (8 runners)
1.40 CONKERS CLAIMING STAKES (£2,752; 1/2 m) (5 runners)

FORM FOCUS

2.10 MARBLES HANDICAP (£2,085; 2m) (11 runners)
1.40 CONKERS CLAIMING STAKES (£2,752; 1/2 m) (5 runners)

FORM FOCUS

2.40 SKITTLES HANDICAP (3-Y-O £2,085; 6f) (7 runners)
3.10 JACKS SELLING STAKES (3-Y-O £1,738; 7f) (9 runners)

FORM FOCUS

3.40 HOPSCOTCH HANDICAP (£3,583; 7f) (13 runners)
4.00 (m) 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE
BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT
Today's Refresher comes from training material for young players, originally devised by Brian Senior for the English Bridge Union (EBU).

KEENE on CHESS
BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT
White: Anatoly Karpov
Black: Viswanathan Anand
Fide world championship
Groningen, January 1998

Diagram of final position for the chess game between Karpov and Anand. Shows the board layout with pieces and their positions.

WINNING MOVE
BY RAYMOND KEENE
White to play. This position is from the game Petrosian-Ivkov, USSR v Yugoslavia 1979. Tactical attacks and mating finishes are not often found in endgames, but this position is an exception.

MADISON
a. A two-tone shoe
b. A group dance
c. To marinate in treacle

HAMAMELIS
a. A shrub
b. Royal beeswax
c. A succulent type of melon

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Table listing trainers, jockeys, and their respective win percentages for various courses.

RICHARD EVANS

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES
THE RUGH COURT
IN THE MATTER OF DANA PETROLEUM PLC AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACTS, 1963-1990

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES
TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE 0171-782 7344

FOOTBALL: BERTI MAY MAKE SPURS DEBUT AT OLD TRAFFORD

New hope for League in battle with Uefa

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON
MANY of the FA Carling Premiership's senior clubs have viewed the Coca-Cola Cup with little more than contempt this season - did Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, really smile after the 20 third-round defeat at Ipswich Town? - but there will be no more disrespect.

Hinchcliffe's move to Tottenham foiled by injury

BY MATT DICKINSON
EVEN the prospect of signing for Tottenham Hotspur appears enough to induce injury these days, with Andy Hinchcliffe's proposed £3 million transfer from Everton collapsing unexpectedly yesterday when an Achilles problem was revealed.

admitted that he may gamble on playing the Italy international, who has 25 caps. It would be a considerable risk given that Berti has made just four appearances as a substitute in Serie A this season and has struggled through injuries for the past couple of years, including an operation to repair knee ligaments.

to tackle the short-term problems at Tottenham and Gross admits that he is not looking further at present than to try to lift the club from relegation trouble. Wimbledon have completed the signing of Carl Leaburn from Charlton Athletic for a fee of £150,000. The 27-year-old striker has been on a weekly contract at The Valley.

World Cup teams to warm up in Dublin

IRELAND will play Mexico, World Cup qualifiers, in Dublin on May 23. Ireland, who narrowly failed to qualify for the finals in France, are also hoping to arrange a game against Yugoslavia at Lansdowne Road on April 22.

and Antoine Sibierski, of Auxerre. Tommy Johnson's proposed move to Crystal Palace from Celtic on loan has been held up by a disagreement about the length of the loan.

Derby themselves have opted not to pursue their interest in Stephane Roche, a midfielder player from Lyons, who has been training with the club. Nottingham Forest have taken Christian Edwards on trial from Swansea City with a view to signing the Wales international defender for £200,000.

FA to hear Newcastle complaint today

NEWCASTLE United's objections to having to play their FA Cup fourth-round tie against Stevenage Borough at Broadhall Way, the Vauxhall Conference club's tiny ground, will be considered by the Football Association at the Hertfordshire club at noon, with a decision expected later in the day.

"totally unacceptable, bearing in mind the immense interest in the tie and the anticipated level of support from Newcastle fans for this match". Originally, the FA showed little concern. "We are happy for the match to go ahead as it was drawn," Steve Double, a spokesman, said. After Newcastle said they would appeal, the FA said it would look at their observations. "It is not embarrassing to us because it is within the rules," Double said.

More than 70 per cent of those who took part in a telephone poll on Tyneside said the match should take place at Stevenage. John Regan, secretary of the Newcastle Independent Supporters' Association, said yesterday: "The whole thing has turned into a farce and all this bickering is taking the gloss off the tie for Stevenage. The Newcastle board have gone completely over the top with their objections. As far as the supporters are concerned, Stevenage were first out of the hat. It is their home tie, they have a safety certificate and that should be that."

Boatman holed by her putter

BY JOHN HOPKINS GOLF CORRESPONDENT

IN THE long history of the President's Putter there have been days when the wind roared over Rye's distinguished links with a greater vengeance than it did yesterday, and days when more milestones in this competition were passed. There cannot have been many, however.



Boatman plays an elegant iron shot on the first fairway in the President's Putter

Hitherto, only three men have played more than 100 matches in this competition. Martin Yates, the 55-year-old chief executive of the Roehampton Club in London, joined this select band yesterday morning and then completed his 101st match when he was beaten by another old Tonbridgean, Simon Ellis, in the afternoon.

It was an auspicious day for Alex Boatman, the daughter of 12, the Carling Cup captain in 1992 and 1994, who became only the second woman to be welcomed into this male stronghold and, sadly, lost on her debut. No less for Peter Gracy, still limping, still carrying his bag as a defiant rejection of advancing age, became, at the age of 76, the first man to compete in 50 consecutive Putters.

Results from Rye 45

what he calls "the staggers", a form of vertigo that prevents him from completing his backswing. Having got the club halfway back, he then gets stuck and has to have another bash. Gracy surrendered on the 16th green to Rob Randall, holding his arms up and waving his white handkerchief.

one of the Society's grandees. A wind of 25-30mph, force six on the Beaufort Scale, is officially known as a strong breeze. Out on the course it felt stronger, as indeed it was when it was gusting to nearly 40mph, a moderate gale. Boatman was almost blown off her feet on the pulpit-like fifth tee. "I can't wait for another go," Boatman, 26, said a couple of hours after she had lost to Steve Sharpe, a Blue in 1977. "I'm annoyed. I don't mean that to sound ungrateful but my most enjoyable rounds before have been

when I have won. On the first tee I was excited and petrified. If I had lost 10 and 8 everyone would have said 'see, women's golf, huh?'. There was as much pressure on Sharpe because few men want the distinction of having been beaten by a woman. "She strikes the ball better than I do," Sharpe said graciously, after winning 3 and 2, having been one down at the turn. Women competing in this event must play from the same tees as the men. Boatman was only a few yards behind her opponent after most drives. Where she

found herself in difficulty was on the short holes. "I'd have a long iron and he'd be playing something like a five. On the fifth for example I could hardly believe by and I had a 140-foot in my hand and hit one of the worst shots of my life." Boatman, lost, however, not because she was overpowered but because she could not putt. She admitted to three-putting at least seven times, covering her face with her hand in embarrassment. "It's been brilliant, though," she said before she returned to Marlborough where she teaches classics.

SWIMMING

Britons to benefit from fresh incentives

FROM CRAIG LORD IN PERTH
A LONDON businessman arrived here for the world championships yesterday and pledged a £7,000 prize to be shared by British swimmers reaching finals or breaking national records. The generosity of Simon Lefevre, who works for a leading financial institution in the City, prompted a delighted Deryk Snelling, the national performance director for swimming, to call for the National Lottery to provide prize-money incentives in future.

RUGBY LEAGUE: RFL CHIEF EXECUTIVE RESIGNS TO ACCEPT ROLE MASTERMINDING MARKETING OF SUPER LEAGUE CLUBS

Lindsay's switch sparks fears of a breakaway



Lindsay: controversy

THE eventful career of Maurice Lindsay at the Rugby Football League (RFL) took another colourful twist yesterday with the first of several announcements that he had resigned as chief executive after five years. His resignation was accepted at a board meeting on Wednesday - the RFL refused to say whether he had been asked to leave - and Lindsay immediately accepted a position as managing director of Super League Europe (SLE), the marketing arm of the 12 Super League clubs. An initial statement by Sir Rodney Walker, the RFL chairman, said that Lindsay had taken up his new duties and that he wished him well.

move by Maurice Lindsay to a position with Super League Europe is to be the subject of a debate at a special general meeting of clubs on January 16. The meeting was demanded by lower-division clubs to discuss terms of his move to SLE. With the appointment of Lindsay, the broker of the original Super League deal, the fear is of a breakaway, which could starve first and second-division clubs of funding by The News Corporation, parent company of The Times and the Super League backers. Another difficulty is that some of the elite clubs had not given their approval. It is unlikely that the smaller clubs could block Lindsay's move, which has had to be put on hold until after the meeting a week today. However, their fears of a shift in the running of the game at the top end could be proved

right as Lindsay, together with Colin Myler, the SLE chief executive, look to reposition the Super League after two difficult seasons. Lindsay said: "I now wish to focus fully on Super League. I was obviously one of the original architects of Super League when it was founded in 1995, but events in Australia made it difficult to complete the task. Super League is quite obviously the flagship of rugby league and its success is vital to the future of the game." With Lindsay between jobs, his RFL deputy, Neil Tunnicliffe, has stepped in as acting chief executive for three months. He is a front-runner for the vacancy. Pressure for Lindsay's resignation reached its height during the club mergers debate in 1995 but has been renewed several times since. Although his powers were curtailed

last year and a restructured board put in place there is little doubt that, with the move to SLE, Lindsay will be as influential as in the past, first during Wigan's rise in the Eighties and then as a ruthless visionary at the RFL, where he succeeded David Oxley as chief executive in November 1992. Last year was far from triumphant for Lindsay, with the world club championship an embarrassing, one-sided flop. His place on the international board became untenable when Super League in Australia and the rival Australian Rugby League made peace last month. As the Super League continues its search for a title sponsor, Lindsay's appointment is a timely one. "His months before the league season. "His experience in the sport will be of immense benefit to us," Myler said.

CRICKET: KENYA SEEK TO CHANGE RESULT OF ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL AS SRI LANKA CONTROL KANDY TEST

England A tour squelches to halt

ENGLAND A may have played their last game on this tour of Kenya as a Special Correspondent writes. Persistent heavy rain throughout the night and into the morning meant that the three-day match here at Ruaraka was abandoned as a draw shortly before lunch on the third and final day. Now the third one-day international, scheduled for Saturday, is in doubt. Originally planned for the ground of the Nairobi club, it was transferred to the Gynkana, where the outfield now qualifies as a wetland area, before being rearranged for Ruaraka, where the groundstaff need a day of sun and breeze to have any chance of producing playable conditions. The players have been trying to keep fit with games of

Foot-sore Donald to play on

ALLAN DONALD, the South Africa fast bowler, has been cleared to play in the World Series Cup one-day international against New Zealand in Brisbane tomorrow after bone scans on a sore foot proved inconclusive. Donald, who has supplanted Hugh Tayfield as South Africa's leading wicket-taker during the Test series with Australia, will have further tests. "There's no definite fracture, but certainly in that area there is plenty of wear and tear," Alan Jordan, the team manager, said. Stuart Milburn, 25, Hampshire fast bowler, has retired from first-class cricket because of a shoulder injury. The Harrogate-born paceman took 39 wickets in 21 first-class matches for the county.

Atapattu joins 200 club

AFTER Marvan Atapattu had completed his maiden Test double-century, the Sri Lanka off spinner, Muttiah Muralitharan and Jayantha Silva, took an early wicket apiece to leave Zimbabwe struggling in the first Test in Kandy yesterday. Atapattu made 223 of Sri Lanka's 469 for nine before Muralitharan bowled Grant Flower for four and Silva, with his third ball, won an appeal for leg-before against newcomer Murray Goodwin, who scored two. Gavin Rennie and Andy Flower, then took Zimbabwe to 46 for two at the close on a pitch already offering assistance to the Sri Lanka spinners. Atapattu had started the day at 129 as Sri Lanka resumed at 265 for four and lasted until six minutes before the tea interval, when he edged a leg break from Paul Strang and was

Atapattu joins 200 club

picked up at slip by Alistair Campbell. The opening batsman's marathon innings had lasted for 597 minutes during which time he hit 29 fours and one six from 446 balls received. He is only the fifth Sri Lanka batsman to score a double-century in Test cricket. He shared a fifth-wicket stand of 95 with Hashan Tillekeratne, who fell just before lunch for 44 when he offered a return catch to Andrew Whitall, an off spinner, who claimed his third wicket with the help of another return catch, given by Ramesh Kaluwatharane when the wicketkeeper had scored 29. Chaminda Vaas contributed a useful 26 before Sri Lanka declared 21 minutes after tea, leaving 23 overs in which their spinners pressed home the advantage.

Seles forced to miss tournament

MONICA Seles, four times the winner of the Australian Open women's title, yesterday withdrew from the competition later this month citing "personal reasons". Paul McNamee, the director of the tournament, said he was unable to shed light on her withdrawal. He could not confirm whether the former world No 1's absence is connected to the health of her father and coach, Karel, who has been suffering from stomach cancer. The run of success being enjoyed by Marcus Fyfe continued yesterday when he defeated Miles Hackett 10-2 in the qualifying competition of the Embassy world championship in Blackpool. Fyfe, of Haringey, London, missed breaks of 126, 75, 53, 105 and 63 as he crashed into the clearaway stand.

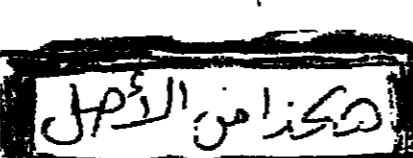
Atapattu joins 200 club

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SPORT IN BRIEF

- Seles forced to miss tournament
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Yveson: Slovakia beat Australia in the deciding mixed doubles rubber yesterday to claim their place in the final of the Hupman Cup mixed team tournament in Perth, Australia. France and South Africa will contest the other semi-final today.
Gulpe: Colonel A. A. (Tony) Danneberg, OBE, the former Walker Cup captain and chairman of selectors, has died at the age of 84. One of the most charismatic figures in the history of Welsh golf, he won the Welsh amateur championship four times between 1936 and 1954.

RUGBY UNION
Club owners urged to try mix and match
FOR THE
BASKETBALL
CRICKET
GOLF
HOCKEY
RUGBY
SWIMMING
TENNIS
WRESTLING
YACHTING



RUGBY UNION

Club owners urged to try mix and match

By Christopher Irvine and Mark Souster

THE OWNERS and backers of the 12 Allied Dunbar Premiership first division clubs, having flexed their muscles by pulling out of European competition late on Wednesday, were yesterday urged to look at a mix-and-match format of league and European fixtures in a desperate attempt to get them back on board for next season. Rather than a six-week block of pool games in the Heineken Cup and European Conference, which would effectively shut down the league programme, as happened last year with consequent losses for all clubs, Cliff Brittle, the chairman of the Rugby Football Union executive committee, is advocating staggered European games to help spread the financial load. Yet the picture now emerging is that the division of money is more of an issue. One prominent club official said that clubs were "sick and tired of being treated like naughty schoolboys" by European Rugby Cup Ltd (ERC) when they had tried to raise fairer distribution of finances, which it is understood, sees Scotland receiving £1.6 million this year and England £1.7 million. Bill Beaumont, one of the English directors on the ERC board, said he was prepared to act as honest broker in an attempt to defuse the crisis, which he and Brittle feel could have been avoided. "The trouble was we were getting conflicting messages from within the clubs," he said. Beaumont believes that a new structure, in which league and European rugby ran side by side, was about to be agreed at the ERC meeting in Dublin last month had the clubs not changed tack. The withdrawal drew fierce criticism yesterday from the Celtic nations, who had seen the possibility of the Heineken Cup and European fixtures as a way of strengthening the European competitions to collapse, that was one of several alternatives, according to Seraphin Bernier, president of France's elite rugby union association. However, apart from discussions, mainly involving Sir John Hall, the Newcastle chairman, and Marcel Martin, a French director of Rugby World Cup Ltd, planning is not advanced. Sir John set out his arguments in Newcastle's match programme. "We don't need the unions to organise our European competitions. We're not children, we're good businessmen and we've been doing this all our lives, and the English and French clubs should organise the European Cup not ERC," he said. "Whatever the Celtic nations feel, they have got to accept that the power lies with England and France. There is no television deal without us. Celtic nations have no value at all... let them see what they can get. The powerhouse driving the game forward is England and France and it might be that we have to be as strong and ruthless as that to keep professional rugby going." Charlie Bisset, a Scottish director of ERC, said: "The French are totally committed to European competition and very keen to make it work. The European Cup will definitely take place next season. Besides, the ERC do not invite individual clubs to participate, they invite the unions to send teams. Who the RFU put up is up to them." Ian Rankin, coach of Caedonia Reds, the Scottish district champions, said that the English clubs' action had "stamped all over" Terry Colner, the Welsh Rugby Union's director of rugby, said: "I believe it's an extremely shortsighted attitude. In France, they have a competition, the ERC, but they're not really committed to it. They're just trying to get sympathy for the actions of their English counterparts."



Evans, who has captained Wales on a record 28 occasions, adds experience and a cutting edge to Bowring's squad

Wales delay naming new captain

By Gerald Davies

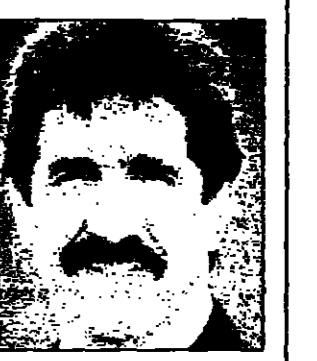
WHILE THERE cannot be overwhelming interest about who should be left or why somebody should be in or out of a squad numbering 53, which Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, announced yesterday, there was news nonetheless, which everyone was delighted to hear. Gwyn Jones, the former Wales captain, who is recovering from a serious neck injury, is making encouraging progress. Bowring was happy to announce that some movement has returned to all four of Jones's limbs. Not only that, he has been able to stand unaided for a brief time. However, it remains difficult to say how long it will take him to make a full recovery. Bowring did not name a captain to replace Jones as he did not think it appropriate.

WALES SQUAD

To play Italy at Stadio Posti on February 7, and for the first national championship. BACKS: A. Bateman (Richmond), N. Bowring (Llanelli), J. Davies (Cardiff), I. Evans (Swansea), G. Gibson (Swansea), G. Grand (London Welsh), H. Hartley (Pontypridd), S. Haywood (Ebbw Vale), R. Howley (Cardiff), D. Jones (Pontypridd), J. Jones (Pontypridd), P. Jones (Pontypridd), J. Lewis (Pontypridd), A. Moore (Pontypridd), K. Morgan (Pontypridd), W. Proctor (Aberystwyth), N. Thomas (Cardiff), M. Thomas (Cardiff), M. Walters (Llanelli), G. West (Pontypridd). FORWARDS: C. Anthony (Swansea), R. Appleyard (Swansea), C. Clarke (Swansea), V. Cooper (Llanelli), N. Eynon (Pontypridd), G. Gwynne (Pontypridd), A. Gifford (Pontypridd), J. Humphreys (Cardiff), G. Jenkins (Swansea), H. Jenkins (Llanelli), J. Jones (Cardiff), K. Jones (Ebbw Vale), A. Lewis (Cardiff), G. Lewis (Pontypridd), M. Lloyd (Pontypridd), R. McBryde (Llanelli), A. Moore (Swansea), S. Moore (Pontypridd), I. Moseley (Cardiff), C. Quinnell (Richmond), S. Quinnell (Richmond), C. Stephens (Cardiff), N. Thomas (Swansea), M. Thomas (Swansea), M. Walters (Cardiff), M. Walters (Cardiff), M. Walters (Cardiff), C. West (Pontypridd), D. Young (Cardiff).

Blood sport in Europe forces English retreat

Once again, we are witnessing the unedifying display of rugby union in Europe...



Rugby Union Commentary

On the other hand the Welsh clubs, apart from Cardiff, are tied to a ten-year loyalty contract that they were asked to sign by the Welsh Rugby Union. For better or worse, the clubs cannot move, even though they are, privately, as unhappy as their English counterparts. Cardiff, if the worst came to the worst, could jump ship and join the English clubs in a proposed competition including French clubs. Since the advent of professionalism, rugby union in Europe has been in a state of crisis. From the moment, a year or so ago, when England were threatened with expulsion from the five nations' championship, there has been an uneasy alliance. It is high time, before the threats become irrevocable fact, for all interested European parties to lock themselves in a room, discuss, debate and have a good scrap if needs be, but to emerge only when they have resolved this intensely damaging state of affairs. The point must never be reached — as could be the case — when future generations might say that rugby union, by then irreversibly changed, proved to be a victim of its own success.

HOCKEY: YOUNG BRITISH OLYMPIAN PLEDGES TO OVERCOME THE AFFECTS OF LONG-TERM INJURY

World title will be tale of eight cities

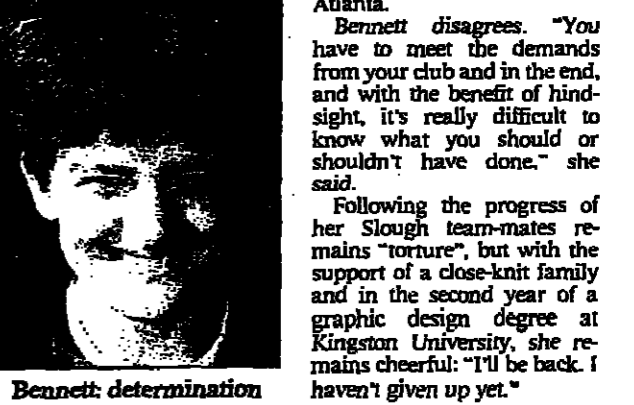
By Sydney Friskin

TWO days of top-class indoor competition start tomorrow with eight teams contesting the world cities championship at the Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, and 12 English clubs battling at two centres for six final places in the national club championship. St Albans, the English champions, are joined by Teddington, Old Loughborough, Stourport, Isca and Hull to form Pool A at Forest Glades arena, Kidderminster. In Pool B, East Grinstead, Reading, Chelmsford, Barford Tigers, Bath Buccaneers and Doncaster assemble at Cocks Moor Woods Leisure Centre, Birmingham. The top three teams from each pool will qualify for the finals, to be held at Crystal Palace on February 6. After their disappointing performance in the DIT Midlands tournament last week, St Albans are reinforced by Jennings, Zak Jones, Owen Jones and Ward, all of whom play outdoors for other clubs. The influence of Jennings alone should help them to qualify. East Grinstead, who won the plate competition in the Midlands tournament, have called on Jeremy Boyse who plays outdoors for Lewes. Old Loughborough have strengthened their hand with two players, Constable and Gardner, brought in from Anzorchians. The two Midlands challengers, Stourport and Barford Tigers, are unchanged. In the world cities championship, Glasgow, New York, Prague and Swansea will contest Pool A; Edinburgh, Dublin, Toronto and Vienna are in Pool B. The winners and runners-up of each group will qualify for the semi-finals. However, the event, lost some of its glamour with the withdrawal of Madrid, last year's winners, and Stockholm because of other commitments. Their places were taken by Swansea and Edinburgh. By virtue of having won the English title last year, St Albans will take part in the ninth European indoor championship at Hamburg, Germany, from February 20 to 22. The setback has proved to be a test of endurance and determination, especially for a player who had made 33 appearances at the age of 20. Could it, perhaps, have been a case of too much, too soon for one so young? Ros Carbon, the Great Britain women's squad doctor in Barcelona and Atlanta, believes all sportsmen and women, including hockey players, are guilty. "A lot don't make it to the top because of chronic injury or psychological burn out," she said. "Hockey has gone from a sport where players trained once a week, and played at the weekend, to a completely professional output with long and arduous tournaments throughout the year." Carbon points out that the majority of the Great Britain bronze medal-winning team in Barcelona were older players. "They got there more slowly and their bodies adapted because they weren't put under such heavy training loads," she said. What cannot be disputed is Britain's punishing schedule of 23 international matches in four months before Atlanta. Bennett disagrees. "You have to meet the demands from your club and in the end, with the benefit of hindsight, it's really difficult to know what you should or shouldn't have done," she said. Following the progress of her Slough team-mates remains "torture", but with the support of a close-knit family and in the second year of a graphic design degree at Kingston University, she remains cheerful: "I'll be back, I haven't given up yet."

Battling Bennett rejects claims over burn out

By Cathy Harris

ANNALY BENNETT was the first schoolgirl to represent England in a World Cup tournament when she played in Dublin in 1994. She is also Great Britain's youngest Olympian, but she has not played a single match since the Atlanta Games because of a serious knee injury. Every day she spends a couple of hours swimming and stretching. Once a fortnight she visits a physiotherapist to report on her progress and receive a new set of exercises. "When you love something, in life and you can't do it, it's very hard," she said. "Some people never find out what they love. I don't have time restraints any more, I've learnt to be patient, waiting to see how it responds." A dull, constant pain that she felt in the build up to Atlanta indicated a problem, and an operation and numerous tests since have shown a growth on the knee cap that affects her patella tendon. Bennett, 21, shies from what she terms "scientific jargon", saying only that the condition is more common among basketball players. The setback has proved to



Bennett determination

FOR THE RECORD

Table with multiple columns listing sports results including Basketball, Cricket, Football, Golf, and Tennis. It includes details like scores, winners, and losers for various matches and tournaments.

Freshwater flies flag for Britain

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN TORONTO

FRESHWATER was outshone by her counterparts from the Alpine nations. However, any advantage born of familiarity was not evident yesterday when the British Land championships opened with two training runs for the downhill. The organisers had attracted a strong field of skiers who had arrived in the Espace Killy resorts of Tignes and Val d'Isère to take part in Europa Cup events the previous day and, for the most part, the

SNOW REPORTS

Table with columns for Location, Depth (cm), Conditions, Runs to resort, Weather (Spms), and Last snow. It provides snow conditions for various locations like Andorra, Austria, France, Italy, and Switzerland.

Minicab comedy clocked as a fare prospect

Best or noisiest first. I wonder? Better make it best, I suppose, or everybody will go around behaving like Jeremy Clarkson and that would never do.

But it's also a triumph for Sullivan, who seems to have learnt from the somewhat two-dimensional pilot. In almost every case (and we didn't meet the whole cast in last night's opening episode) he's made the character just a little bit more interesting than they would need to be for your standard sitcom.

They had just returned from Barbados where they had to be repaired their marriage and accidentally stir up a little racial tension. 'I'd hardly call slavery hard work,' interrupted Sam.

Matthew Bond
on the slow side, but it's quality stuff that refreshingly seems to have been written for everyone, rather than the lads' staggering back from the pub.

duly promised to show us 'the world beyond... a Ferrari 358'. Pretty much all you need to know.

to all this ridiculous machismo looked to be Horizon Special: Crash (BBC2), a curious programme apparently made to mark the 100th anniversary of the first driver to be killed in a car crash.

might have worked, but they weren't and the resultant cobbled-together concoction was barely worthy of the Horizon name.

6.00am Business Breakfast (24712)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (53606)
9.00 All Over the Shop Consumer game show (583826)

7.00am See Hear Breakfast News (T and signing) (2916075)
7.15 Takeaway (t) (2651844) 7.40 Caesar Classics (2786185) 8.00 The Ready Wild Show (t) (T) (4666229) 8.25 William's Wish Wellingtons (t) (2965460) 8.35 Weighing (t) (261712)

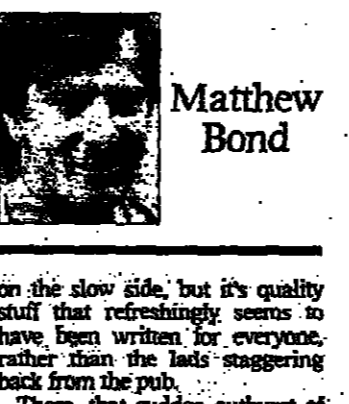
6.00pm GMTV (9188731)
9.25 Win, Lose or Draw (T) (5871083)
9.55 Regional News (T) (8324880)
10.00 The Time, the Place (77731)
10.30 This Morning (5000028)

As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (7837335)
1.50 Our House (3910602)

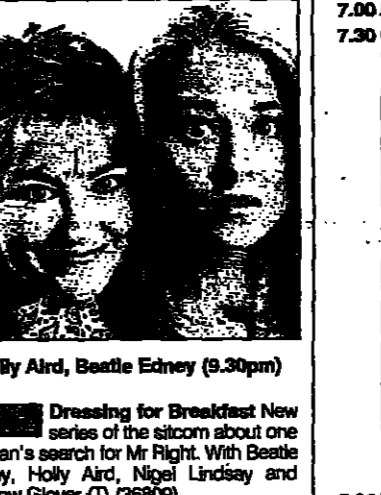
7.00am The Bigger Breakfast (94989) 9.00 Hang Time (t) (84018) 9.30 The Secret World of Alex Mack (t) (45557) 10.00 Miesha (t) (75373) 10.30 Hangin' with Mr. Cooper (t) (99880) 11.00 The Montekes (3354) 11.30 The Bigger Breakfast (851915) 11.45 The Pink Panther (t) (5149170) 12.00 Sesame Street (13460)

12.30pm Light Lunch with Holly Aird and Beattie Eshay (57557)
1.30 None But the Brave (1965) Second World War drama starring and directed by Frank Sinatra. Also with Clint Walker and Tommy Sands (47712)

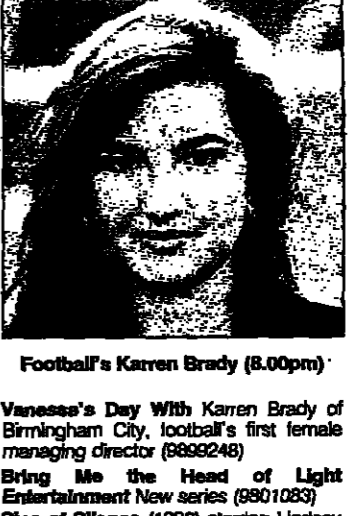
CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge.



Matthew Bond



Holly Aird, Beattie Eshay (9.30pm)



Footballer's Karen Brady (8.00pm)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes
The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes. These are used to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you want to record.

10.20 Parkinson The celebrated chat-show host makes a return to the screen after a 15-year absence to welcome his guests - the comedian Paul Merton, the singer Barry Manilow and the Oscar-winning actor Sir Anthony Hopkins (54877)

10.30 The Black Adder The first series of the award-winning comedy set in the Dark Ages (T) (723753)

10.30 The Mean Season (1985) with Kurt Russell, Mariel Hemingway and Richard Jordan. A journalist strikes up an uneasy relationship with a serial killer, which places both his and his girlfriend's life in danger (T) (7062348)

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For further listings see Saturday's Vision

SKY 1

SKY SPORTS 3

SKY MOVIES GOLD

SKY SPORTS 2

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 1

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 2

SATELLITE AND CABLE



Brad Pitt stars in Legends of the Fall (Sky Screen 2, 8.00pm)

These titles (247321) 10.00 Drury and Malpas (247321) 10.00 Drury and Malpas (247321) 10.00 Drury and Malpas (247321)

Disney Channel
8.00pm Disney Fairytale
8.30pm Disney Fairytale

Paramount Comedy
7.00pm Grosse Pointe (1999) 7.30pm Grosse Pointe (1999)

Travel (Cable)
8.30pm Travel Live
8.45pm Travel Live



RUGBY UNION 45

Evans back in the running for national service



FRIDAY JANUARY 9 1998

Customs find puts drugs issue back in spotlight at world championships

Swimmers put China in dock

FROM CRAIG LORD IN PERTH

CHINESE swimmers heading for the world championships were greeted by armed guards and a media scrum when they arrived at Perth airport last night after customs officials found a flask believed to contain human growth hormone in their luggage during a routine stop-over in Sydney.



Yuan is escorted to the China team bus by officers at Perth airport yesterday after the discovery of a flask in her luggage raised suspicions

The 26 vials in the flask, 13 of them labelled Somatotropin, a human growth hormone (HGH), and 13 of saline solution, were sent to a laboratory for testing. They were discovered in a bag belonging to Yuan Yuan, who in 1994, the year seven Chinese swimmers tested positive for anabolic steroids, had won silver and bronze medals in the two breaststroke races at the world championships in Rome.

Human growth hormone (HGH) is a concentrated form of a naturally produced hormone that helps the body build muscle tissue. Its application results in significant gains in strength and size by stimulating production of muscle cells and strengthening connective tissue and tendon.

Human growth hormone (HGH) is a concentrated form of a naturally produced hormone that helps the body build muscle tissue. Its application results in significant gains in strength and size by stimulating production of muscle cells and strengthening connective tissue and tendon.

report on the stars of these championships. Condemnation of the Chinese was widespread. Don Talbot, head of Australian swimming, claimed the Chinese had been "caught with their hand in the cookie jar".

The incident casts serious doubts over denials of a state drugs programme in China after two of its women set world records in October to take to eight out of 13 the number of events in which Chinese women lead the world going into Perth.

The news from Sydney came barely an hour after Mustapha Larfaoui, president of Fina, the international governing body of swimming, had declared that 320 out-of-competition tests had been carried out in 1997 and had urged the media to "please stop the doping talk and

Rusedski fails to raise the temperature in desert duel

FROM ALEX RAMSAY IN DOHA

THE first tennis tournament of the year is a bit like the first week back at school — the big boys have to establish the pecking order and the new lads have to be roughed up a little. Unfortunately, not all of them take kindly to the treatment, and last night Karim Alami had a good crack at fighting back when Greg Rusedski, the No 1 seed, tried to show him who was chief milk monitor here in the second round of the Qatar Open.

Alami, from Morocco, is a stylish young chap who plays his tennis with only one eye on the opponent: the other firmly on the crowd. He loves to entertain. It may not be the most efficient way to make a living — he has yet to win a title but he has had the better of Pete Sampras and Michael Chang in his day — but it is often enough to put an opponent off his stride.

Rusedski helped Alami on his way, dropping his service in the opening game but breaking back straight away; normal service, it seemed, had been resumed. Alami's ability to improvise from every area of the court was winning him points but not the ones that mattered. Broken to love in the sixth game, the first set was effectively over, and, in dropping his next service game with a double fault and a fluffed volley, Alami seemed to have given it all away.

The Briton was unable to get the floundering service fully warmed up, however — it is the middle of winter, even in the Persian Gulf — and he had to fend off a break point at the start of the second set before dealing with the full range of Alami's tricks. Belting away smashes in the Pete Sampras slam-dunk manner, Alami even won one point lying flat on his face, having dived to retrieve a Rusedski volley. He may have scuffed his knees but at least he was still in contention.

Only when it came to the crunch did the flamboyance evaporate. Serving to stay in the match at 4-5 he played a steady and controlled game, but asked to do it a second time, at 5-6, the task was beyond him. He pushed a backhand long, but, in the

noise of the enthusiastic local support, he failed to hear the call. After a debate with the umpire he was nailed by a Rusedski backhand and polished off when the world No 6 clipped the net with his next return and the ball spun away out of reach. Rusedski had taught the new boy a lesson and was through 6-2, 7-5.

He will play the unorthodox Fabrice Santoro, from France, in the quarter-finals, with a potential final against Tim Henman still an alluring possibility.

Santoro is ranked No 29 in the world and has only won one title in his career, and that at his 16th attempt in Lyon last year. It was something of



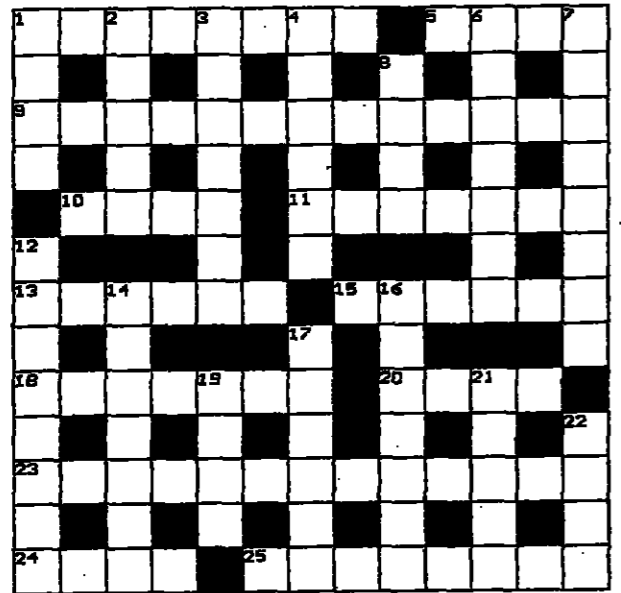
Rusedski lesson

a family achievement as Santoro teamed up with his father, Marcel, at the start of the year and under his guidance as coach had his best season on the circuit, beating Thomas Muster, Sergi Bruguera and Marcelo Rios on his travels.

In the coldest winter in Qatar in years, only the heat of battle can keep the hypothermia at bay, but for one overzealous Swiss fan it all proved too much. After Marc Rosset's defeat by Goran Ivanisevic, a long march of dubious line calls and one vital over-rule from the umpire, the spectator sought out the line judge he felt had cost his boy the match and hit him with a furred Swiss flag. It did not make him any warmer but it did make him feel better, especially when the authorities decided to turn a blind eye.

Results, page 45

TIMES CROSSWORD



No 1298

- ACROSS
1 Apparition; guest from afar (8)
5 Optimism (4)
9 Opposition leaders (6,7)
10 Joke (4)
11 Shake with nerves (7)
13 Convince; state positively (6)
15 Breathe harshly; trick (6)
18 Brave girl (7)
20 For fear that (4)
23 Negligent nursery-rhyme shepherd (6,3,4)
24 Relaxation (4)
25 Most imposing (8)

- SOLUTION TO NO 1297
ACROSS: 6 Cook the books 7 Malice 8 Twenty 9 Well 10 Derisory 12 Ben Nevis 16 Rate 18 Influx 20 Unique 21 Rags to riches
DOWN: 1 Bouillon 2 Attend 3 Nectar 4 Note 5 Skater 6 Crane 11 Straight 13 Ennord 14 Vox pop 15 Studio 17 Truss 19 Lose

England party decamp to Jamaica searching for an island in the sun

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN ANTIGUA

WITH a perverse inevitability, England's cricketers evacuated Antigua yesterday under the bluest skies they have seen since their arrival. Their flight to Jamaica, four days earlier than scheduled, was born out of a commendable desire for productive practice but it was made more in desperation than conviction.

Of Wednesday evening, David Lloyd was seen surrounded by printouts from the Internet. These proved to be detailed weather forecasts for the entire Caribbean region and Lloyd, the England coach, was studying them in his agitation to get the show moving.

Kingston was the choice for two reasons. It was, in any event, the next scheduled stop, before the start of the match programme in Montego Bay a week today, and Lloyd had identified the southern Jamaican city as potentially the driest of the available alternatives.

When bowled or struck in anger, however, it can seem close to purgatory. Lloyd's nature will also have had plenty to do with the move. Nervous, impulsive and restless, it was Lloyd who identified the potential benefits of this extra week in Antigua, visiting the facilities at Sabina Park because there is a match on. The most they can hope for is to borrow a club ground.



Lloyd is hoping Jamaica will provide better weather

Kenyan debase, page 44

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP

NEW TIMES CROSSWORD TITLES NOW AVAILABLE! The Times Two Crosswords (Book 7-12/99), The Times Crosswords (Book 20 Crosswords-22/99), The Times British Crosswords Book 3 is available to Times readers for just 14 (RRP £4.95), which saves just from The Times Bookshop.

Advertisement for bookshop featuring photos of Dennis Bergkamp and Lawrence Dallaglio, and text: 'Dennis Bergkamp: Oliver Holt meets the Dutch master', 'Lawrence Dallaglio on Will Carling'. 13 pages of Times sport

Advertisement for 'THE DICKIE BIRD CHARACTER JUG'. Commemorating the retirement of the world's best loved umpire. A strictly limited edition of 9,500. On Monday 24th June, 1996, legendary cricket umpire and Yorkshireman Harold 'Dickie' Bird retired from international cricket, after presiding over his 66th Test Match, 92 One Day International Matches, 4 World Cup Tournaments and 3 World Cup Finals. However he will continue to stand at county matches. Now Royal Doulton commemorates Dickie's unique contribution to the game with the Dickie Bird Character Jug, hand-crafted, and painted in traditional Royal Doulton style, the jug captures perfectly the warmth and individuality of Dickie's character. With a delightful 'cricket bat' handle bearing the Test and County Cricket Board initials, it is available only from Lawleys by Post for £49.95, payable in interest free instalments.

Blair trip clouded Cook's love life

هكذا من الأصل